

STUDIES OF RELIGION (REL315124)

External Assessment Specifications

External Assessment Specifications inform the development of external assessments. The primary audience for this document is the course Setting Examiner and Exam Critics. It may also be of use to teachers and students.

These specifications must be read in conjunction with the current course document, available on the [TASC Courses](#) webpage.

FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

The external assessment for this course consists of a **written exam**.

The written exam is **THREE hours**.

The written exam includes **THREE sections** and students must choose **ONE question** from each section.

Students will have an additional 15-minute preparation time during which students can take notes on the note paper provided and highlight any key words in the exam booklet during the allocated time. Students will not be permitted to start their exam until advised by the Exam Supervisor.

There will be **THREE** booklets. Each booklet will focus on the course content, knowledge and skills of a different module.

CRITERIA TO BE ASSESSED

The criteria to be externally assessed are:

- Criterion 1 select and apply communication skills and strategies for specific purposes, contexts and audiences
- Criterion 3 analyse religious beliefs, values and practices
- Criterion 6 analyse a variant within a religious tradition
- Criterion 7 analyse how a religious tradition responds to contemporary religious issues
- Criterion 8 analyse points of view within religious traditions.

All elements of all criteria listed above will be assessed.

SPECIFIC MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT APPROVED FOR USE BY STUDENTS

- There are no specific materials or equipment for REL315124.

ASSESSMENT

All criteria are initially assessed using extended alpha ratings: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, t+, t, t-, z.

A set of solutions or a marking tool will be developed by the Setting Examiner, reviewed by the Marking Coordinator and provided to markers at the marking meeting that follows the external written exam. The solutions or marking tool will be available from TASC in the following year.

The external assessment **must** include questions that, separately or together, give opportunities to demonstrate the standards from rating C to rating A.

Final results will be awarded as a rating of A, B, C, t or z in the above criteria. These ratings are used in determining the final award according to the algorithm in the course document.

SECTION A

Structure

- Students should spend approximately 60 minutes responding to this section.
- Students will respond to ONE of two questions.
- This section will address the course content of Module 1 – Religious tradition 1.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 1 select and apply communication skills and strategies for specific purposes, contexts and audiences
- Criterion 3 analyse religious beliefs, values and practices
- Criterion 6 analyse a variant within a religious tradition.

Nature of Questions

- Students may be provided with a maximum of TWO stimulus items, ONE per question.
- If provided, the stimulus will be either written or pictorial.
- Students will respond to ONE of two questions.
- Questions in this section will carry equal weighting.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be in extended essay format.

SECTION B

Structure

- Students should spend approximately 60 minutes responding to this section.
- Students will respond to ONE of two questions.
- This section will address course content from Module 2 – Religious tradition 2.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 1 select and apply communication skills and strategies for specific purposes, contexts and audiences.
- Criterion 3 analyse religious beliefs, values and practices.
- Criterion 7 analyse how a religious tradition responds to contemporary religious issues.

Nature of Questions

- Students will be provided with TWO questions. Both questions will address contemporary issues.
- ONE question will address the issue of suffering.
- ONE question will address the issue of religious ethics.
- Questions in this section will carry equal weighting.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be in extended essay format.

SECTION C

Structure

- Students should spend approximately 60 minutes responding to this section.
- Students will respond to ONE of five questions.
- This section will address course content from Module 3 – Depth study topics.

Assessed Criteria

- Criterion 1 select and apply communication skills and strategies for specific purposes, contexts and audiences
- Criterion 3 analyse religious beliefs, values and practices
- Criterion 8 analyse points of view within religious traditions.

Nature of Questions

- Students will be provided with FIVE questions – one for each depth study topic.
- The questions will require students to draw on their knowledge and skills from the teacher-led depth study and will invite additional contributions from the student-selected extension to the depth study.
- Questions in this section will carry equal weighting.

Nature of Responses

- Responses will be in extended essay format.

MARKING

The marking tool will be developed by the Setting Examiner, reviewed by the Marking Coordinator, ratified at the initial marking meeting and adopted by all markers.

The marking tool can only require knowledge and skills that are already clearly articulated in the course document and can be measured by the wording of the standards in the relevant criteria.

Markers are to assess all criteria using extended ratings A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, t+, t, t-, z. Please note that C- is a low C, as in it meets that standard for a C.

Final results for each criterion will be recorded as A, B, C, t or z. These ratings are used in determining the final award according to the algorithm in the course document.

ADVICE TO SETTERS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Use of Terms

Command words and instructions from the syllabus document will be used in exam questions and are to be taken from the context of the relevant criteria as well as from the course content.

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR SETTERS AND CRITICS

Section A

- No question can refer to a specific religion.
- All questions must be generic so that students can answer them regardless of the religion that they have studied.
- All questions must represent a consistent level of complexity and offer equal scope for responses.
- Questions must invite knowledge and understanding to inform analysis of beliefs and practices.
- Questions must provide sufficient opportunities for analysis of variants within religious traditions with supporting evidence.

Section B

- No question will refer to a specific religion.
- All questions must be generic so that students can answer them regardless of the religion that they have studied.
- Both questions must represent a consistent level of complexity and offer equal scope for responses.
- Both questions must refer to 'contemporary issues', in line with the course document.
- Questions must invite knowledge and understanding to inform analysis of beliefs and practices.
- ONE question must require substantial analysis of the ways in which the student's chosen religious tradition responds to suffering with supporting evidence.
- ONE question must require substantial analysis of the ways in which the student's chosen religious tradition responds to an ethical issue with supporting evidence.
- Ethics topics for Question 4 can consist of:
 - responses or actions based upon interpretations of religious doctrines and sacred texts
 - moral responsibility for an ecological crisis and the use of natural resources according to the religious tradition
 - how the religious tradition promotes social justice in relation to human rights issue or homelessness
 - how the religious tradition has responded to an event such as a war, rebellion or political turmoil
 - how the religious tradition has responded to cases of medical intervention such as abortion or euthanasia
 - how the religious tradition responds to a range of relationships such as pre-marital relationships and marriage, including arranged or same-sex marriage.

Section C

- No question will refer to a specific religion.
- All questions must be generic so that students can answer them regardless of the religion that they have studied.
- All questions must represent a consistent level of complexity and offer equal scope for responses.
- Questions must require substantial analysis of beliefs and practices.
- Questions must require analysis of a range of points of view: both the student's own justified point of view and those of others.
- Questions will relate to the following five topics:
 - Women and religion
 - Contemporary war or conflict
 - Religious ethics
 - Science and religion
 - Aboriginal Spirituality.

Avoiding topic overlap between sections

The same topic must not be used to answer questions in different sections. Therefore:

- Students who answer Question 3 (religious response to suffering) in Section B of the exam cannot then answer Question 6 (contemporary war or conflict) in Section C.
- Students who answer Question 4 (religious response to an ethical issue) in Section B of the exam cannot then answer Question 7 (contemporary ethical dilemma) in Section C.