



## GCSE Religious Studies

There will be direct questions on these

These are relevant and should also be revised.

### Christianity

#### Key beliefs

- The nature of God:
  - God as omnipotent, loving and just, and the problem of evil and suffering
  - the oneness of God and the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Different Christian beliefs about creation including the role of Word and Spirit (John 1:1-3 and Genesis 1:1-3).
- Different Christian beliefs about the afterlife and their importance, including: resurrection and life after death; judgement, heaven and hell.

#### Jesus Christ and salvation

- Beliefs and teachings about:
  - the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God
  - the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension
  - sin, including original sin
  - the means of salvation, including law, grace and Spirit
  - the role of Christ in salvation including the idea of atonement.

### Practices:

#### Worship and festivals

- The role and meaning of the sacraments:
  - the meaning of sacrament
  - the sacrament of baptism and its significance for Christians; infant and believers' baptism; different beliefs about infant baptism which it is celebrated and different interpretations of its meaning.
  - the celebrations of Christmas and Easter, including their importance for Christians in Great Britain today.

#### The role of the church in the local and worldwide community

- The place of mission, evangelism and Church growth.
- The importance of the worldwide Church including:
  - working for reconciliation
  - how Christian churches respond to persecution

# Buddhism

## Key Beliefs

### The Dhamma (Dharma)

- The Three Marks of Existence:
  - anicca (impermanence)
  - anatta (no fixed self)
  - dukkha (unsatisfactoriness of life, suffering).
- The human personality, in the Theravada and Mahayana traditions:
- Theravada: the Five Aggregates (skandhas) of form, sensation, perception, mental formations, consciousness
- Mahayana: sunyata, the possibility of attaining Buddhahood and Buddha-nature.
- Human destiny:
  - different ideals in Theravada and Mahayana traditions: Arhat (a 'perfected person') and Bodhisattva ideals
  - Buddhahood and the Pure Land.

### The Buddha and the Four Noble Truths

- The Buddha's life and its significance:
  - the birth of the Buddha and his life of luxury
  - the Four Sights: illness, old age, death, holy man (Jataka 075)
  - the Buddha's ascetic life
  - the Buddha's Enlightenment.
- The Four Noble Truths:
  - suffering (dukkha) including different types of suffering
  - the causes of suffering (samudaya); the Three Poisons, ignorance, greed and hate
  - the end of craving (tanha), interpretations of nibbana (nirvana) and Enlightenment
  - the Eightfold Path (magga) to nibbana/nirvana; the pathas the Threefold Way: ethics (sila), meditation (samadhi) and wisdom (panna). Dhammapada 190–191.

## Practices

### Worship and festivals

- The nature, use and importance of Buddhist places of worship including temples, shrines, monasteries (viharas), halls for meditation or learning (gompas) and their key features including Buddha rupa, artefacts and offerings.
- Meditation, the different aims, significance and methods of meditation:
  - Samatha (concentration and tranquillity) including mindfulness of breathing
  - Vipassana (insight) including zazen
  - the visualisation of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
- The practice and significance of different ceremonies and rituals associated with death and mourning in Theravada communities and in Japan and Tibet.
- Ethical teaching:
  - kamma (karma) and rebirth
  - compassion (karuna)
  - loving kindness (metta).
- The five moral precepts:
  - do not take life
  - do not take what is not given
  - do not misuse the senses
  - do not speak falsehoods
  - do not take intoxicants that cloud the mind.
- The six perfections in the Mahayanan tradition:
  - generosity
  - morality
  - patience
  - energy
  - meditation
  - wisdom, including how the individual develops these perfections within themselves.