Option A: A Study of Christianity

Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	**Jesus – his birth:** Consistency and credibility of the birth narratives (Matthew 1:18-2:23; Luke 1:26-2:40); harmonisation and redaction; interpretation and application of the birth narratives to the doctrine of the incarnation (substantial presence and the kenotic model).
B.	**Jesus – his resurrection:** The views of Rudolf Bultmann and N.T. Wright on the relation of the resurrection event to history; interpretation and application to the understanding of death, the soul, resurrected body and the afterlife, with reference to Matthew 10:28; John 20-21; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 1:21-24.
C.	**The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority in daily life:** The ways in which the Bible is considered authoritative: as a source of moral advice (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Luke 6:36-37); as a guide to living (Psalm 119:9-16; Psalm 119:105-112); as teaching on the meaning and purpose of life (Genesis 1:26-28; Ecclesiastes 9:5-9) and as a source of comfort and encouragement (Psalm 46:1-3; Matthew 6:25).

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The extent to which the birth narratives provide insight into the doctrine of the incarnation.
- The relative importance of redaction criticism for understanding the biblical birth narratives.
- The nature of the resurrected body.
- The historical reliability of the resurrection.
- The relative value of the Bible as teaching on the meaning and purpose of life.
- The extent to which the Psalms studied offer a guide to living for Christians.

Option A: A Study of Christianity

	Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts
	Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief
D.	**The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority:** How the Christian biblical canon was established. Diverse views on the Bible as the word of God: different understandings of inspiration (the objective view of inspiration; the subjective view of inspiration; John Calvin's doctrine of accommodation).
E.	**The early church (in Acts of the Apostles):** Its message and format: the kerygmata as presented by C. H. Dodd, with reference to Acts 2:14-39; 3:12-26. The challenges to the kerygmata (with reference to the historical value of the speeches in Acts and the work of Rudolf Bultmann). The adapting of the Christian message to suit the audience.
F.	**Two views of Jesus:** A comparison of the work of two key scholars, including their views of Jesus with reference to their different methods of studying Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright. Crossan: Jesus the social revolutionary; using apocryphal gospels; seeing Jesus as a product of his time; what the words of Jesus would have meant in Jesus' time. Wright: Jesus the true Messiah; critical realism; texts as 'the articulation of worldviews'; seeks to find the best explanation for the traditions found in the Gospels.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The extent to which the Bible can be regarded as the inspired word of God.
- Whether the Christian biblical canonical orders are inspired, as opposed to just the texts they contain.
- The extent to which the kerygmata (within the areas of Acts studied) are of any value for Christians today.
- Whether the speeches in Acts have any historical value.
- The validity of using critical realism to understand Jesus.
- The validity of using apocryphal gospels to understand Jesus.

Option A: A Study of Christianity

	Theme 2: Religious concepts and religious life
	Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief
A.	**Religious concepts – the nature of God:** **Is God male?** The issue of male language about God; the pastoral benefits and challenges of the model of Father; Sallie McFague and God as mother. **Can God suffer?** The impassibility of God; the modern view of a suffering God illustrated by Jurgen Moltmann (The Crucified God).
B.	**Religious concepts – the Trinity:** The need for the doctrine of the Trinity: the nature and identity of Christ (issues of divinity and pre-existence) and Christ's relationship with the Father (co-equal and co-eternal). The origin of the Holy Spirit: the filioque controversy.
C.	**Religious concepts – the Atonement:** Three theories of the Atonement (which are not mutually exclusive): the death of Jesus as Christus Victor (with reference to the liberation of humanity from hostile powers); the death of Jesus as a substitution (both the belief that Jesus died as a substitute for humanity, and the belief that only the divine-human Jesus could act as a sacrifice by God for the sake of humanity); the death of Jesus as a moral example (of how to live and die). The underlying assumptions about the need for divine forgiveness and the conflict between the wrath and love of God in theories of the Atonement.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The validity of referring to God as mother.
- The theological implications of a suffering God.
- The monotheistic claims of the doctrine of the Trinity.
- Whether the doctrine of the Trinity is necessary to understand the God of Christianity.
- The extent to which the three theories of the Atonement are contradictory.
- The extent to which the three theories suggest that the Christian God is cruel.

Option A: A Study of Christianity

Theme 2: Religious concepts and religious life
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

D.	**Religious life – faith and works:** Luther's arguments for justification by faith alone (with reference to Romans 1:17; 5:1; Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16 and Luther's rejection of James 2:24); the Council of Trent as a response to Luther; E. P. Sanders and the role of works in justification.
E.	**Religious life – the community of believers:** The New Testament community of believers as a model for churches today (with reference to Acts 2:42-47); the role of churches in providing worship and sacraments, religious teaching, mission, service and outreach, and fellowship for the community of believers.
F.	**Religious life – key moral principles:** Selected key moral principles of Christianity: the importance of love of neighbour (Leviticus 19:34; Luke 10:25-28); God's love as a potential model for Christian behaviour (Exodus 34:6-7; 1 John 4:19-21); regard for truth (1 Samuel 12:24; Ephesians 4:25-27); the role of conscience (2 Corinthians 1:12; 1 Timothy 1:5); and the need for forgiveness (Matthew 6:14-15; Colossians 3:12-13).

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The extent to which both faith and works are aspects of justification.
- The extent to which the New Testament letters support arguments for justification by faith alone.
- Whether the main role of the church is to provide religious teaching.
- The extent to which contemporary Christian churches should follow the New Testament model.
- Whether love of neighbour is the most important moral principle in Christianity.
- The extent to which God's behaviour towards humans is the basis for Christian morality.

Option A: A Study of Christianity

Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	**Social developments in religious thought – attitudes towards wealth:** The dangers of wealth (with reference to Mark 10:17-25; Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 12:33-34, 1 Timothy 6:10); apparent contradiction between biblical teaching on stewardship and the ascetic ideal; the prosperity gospel of the Word-Faith movement.
B.	**Social developments in religious thought – migration and Christianity in the UK:** The challenges of Christian migration to the UK, with reference to assimilation, provision of worship, style of worship and issues of culture. The reverse mission movement to the UK.
C.	**The relationship between religion and society: religion, equality and discrimination.** **Social developments in religious thought – feminist theology and the changing role of men and women:** The contribution of Mary Daly and Rosemary Radford Ruether to feminist theology. The changing role of men and women with reference to the issue of the ordination of women priests and bishops; the impact on the lives of believers and communities within Christianity today.
Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: - The extent to which wealth is a sign of God's blessing. - Whether the ascetic ideal is compatible with Christianity. - The extent to which the UK is a modern mission field. - The relative ease of assimilation of Christian migrants into Christian churches in the UK. - Whether men and women are equal in Christianity. - The extent to which feminist theology impacts modern Christian practice.	

Option A: A Study of Christianity

Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

D.	**The relationship between religion and society: respect and recognition and the ways that religious traditions view other religions and non-religious worldviews and their truth claims.** **Historical developments in religious thought – challenges from secularisation:** The conflicting religious and non-religious views on Christianity in the UK (the value of Christian faith schools; whether the UK can be called a 'Christian country'); beliefs conflicting with laws of the country; perceived challenges to Christianity (decline of role and status of Christianity; reduced impact in public life; restricted religious liberty).
E.	**The relationship between religion and society: respect and recognition and the ways that religious traditions view other religions and non-religious worldviews and their truth claims.** **Historical developments in religious thought – challenges from science:** Richard Dawkins' and Alister McGrath's contrasting views on the relationship between religion and science, and the nature of proof; the limits of science; the 'God of the gaps' argument.
F.	**Historical developments in religious thought – challenges from pluralism and diversity within a tradition:** Difference between religious pluralism and tolerance of religious diversity; the exclusivist and inclusivist views expressed in the Christian Bible (Deut 6:5; Joshua 23:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12); the contribution of John Hick and Karl Rahner to Christian inclusivism (and the difference between their positions); the differences between Christian universalism and pluralistic universalism.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
- The effectiveness of the Christian response to the challenge of secularism.   - The extent to which the UK can be called a Christian country.   - The extent to which a scientist must be an atheist.   - Whether science has reduced the role of God in Christianity.   - The extent to which it is possible to be both a committed Christian and a religious pluralist.   - The extent to which the Christian Bible promotes exclusivism.

Option A: A Study of Christianity

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

A.	**Religious identity through diversity in baptism:** The case for infant baptism by Augustine and Zwingli (the role of baptism in salvation; the role and importance of Christian parents)**;** the case for believer's baptism with reference to Karl Barth (the example of Christ; importance of consent).
B.	**Religious identity through diversity in Eucharist:** The importance of the Eucharist in the life of contemporary Christian communities; selected modern Roman Catholic theories (transignification and transfinalization); selected Protestant approaches (consubstantiation and memorialism); the similarities in Eucharistic practice in Christian traditions.
C.	**Religious identity through diversity in festivals:** **Christmas** The similarities (with reference to the focus on incarnation of Christ) and differences (date of celebration; focus of Advent season; Christmas services) between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western churches' celebration of Christmas. **Easter** The similarities (with reference to the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ) and differences (date; liturgical practice at Easter; the diversity within each stream of tradition) between the Eastern Orthodox and the Western churches' celebration of Easter.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • The extent to which both infant and adult baptism are just symbolic acts. • The criteria for expressing the commitment to be baptised. • The extent to which there is any common ground within contemporary understandings of the Eucharist. • The extent to which theoretical beliefs about the Eucharist affect the practice of different denominations. • Whether the different emphases and practices mean that Easter is a different celebration in the Eastern Orthodox and Western churches. • The relative importance of Easter and Christmas.

Option A: A Study of Christianity

Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

D.	**Religious identity through unification:** The development of the Ecumenical Movement since 1910 (World Missionary Conference); the World Council of Churches, its rationale, its mission and its work in three main areas: Unity, Mission, and Ecumenical Relations; Public Witness and Diakonia; and Ecumenical Formation.

How developments in beliefs and practices have, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in philosophical, ethical studies of religion.

E.	**Religious identity through religious experience:** The development of the Charismatic Movement post-1960; main beliefs; implications for Christian practice in the experience of believers and Christian communities; philosophical challenges to charismatic experience (verification and natural explanation).
F.	**Religious identity through responses to poverty and injustice:** The basis (political, ethical and religious) of South American liberation theology with reference to Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff; Roman Catholic Church responses to South American liberation theology.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
- Whether the work of the World Council of Churches can be viewed as a success or a failure.   - The extent to which the non-membership of the Roman Catholic Church affects the aims of the World Council of Churches.   - The strengths and weaknesses of the Charismatic Movement.   - Whether a natural explanation for charismatic experiences conflicts with the religious value of the experience.   - Whether the political and ethical foundations of liberation theology are more important than any religious foundations.   - The extent to which liberation theology offered a cultural challenge to the Roman Catholic Church.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – inductive
This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

A.	**Inductive arguments – cosmological:** Inductive proofs; the concept of 'a *posteriori'*. Cosmological argument: St Thomas Aquinas' first Three Ways - (motion or change; cause and effect; contingency and necessity). The Kalam cosmological argument with reference to William Lane Craig (rejection of actual infinities and concept of personal creator).
B.	**Inductive arguments – teleological:** St Thomas Aquinas' Fifth Way - concept of governance; archer and arrow analogy. William Paley's watchmaker - analogy of complex design. F. R. Tennant's anthropic and aesthetic arguments - the universe specifically designed for intelligent human life.
C.	**Challenges to inductive arguments:** David Hume - empirical objections and critique of causes (cosmological). David Hume - problems with analogies; rejection of traditional theistic claims: designer not necessarily God of classical theism; apprentice god; plurality of gods; absent god (teleological). Alternative scientific explanations including Big Bang theory and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
- Whether inductive arguments for God's existence are persuasive.   - The extent to which the Kalam cosmological argument is convincing.   - The effectiveness of the cosmological/teleological argument for God's existence.   - Whether cosmological/teleological arguments for God's existence are persuasive in the 21st Century.   - The effectiveness of the challenges to the cosmological/teleological argument for God's existence.   - Whether scientific explanations are more persuasive than philosophical explanations for the universe's existence.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – deductive
This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

	Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief
D.	**Deductive arguments - origins of the ontological argument** Deductive proofs; the concept of '*a priori'.* St Anselm - God as the greatest possible being (Proslogion 2). St Anselm - God has necessary existence (Proslogion 3).
E.	**Deductive arguments - developments of the ontological argument:** Rene Descartes - concept of God as supremely perfect being; analogies of triangles and mountains/valleys. Norman Malcolm - God as unlimited being: God's existence as necessary rather than just possible.
F.	**Challenges to the ontological argument:** Gaunilo, his reply to St Anselm; his rejection of the idea of a greatest possible being that can be thought of as having separate existence outside of our minds; his analogy of the idea of the greatest island as a ridicule of St Anselm's logic. Immanuel Kant's objection - existence is not a determining predicate: it cannot be a property that an object can either possess or lack.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • The extent to which 'a priori' arguments for God's existence are persuasive. • The extent to which different religious views on the nature of God impact on arguments for the existence of God. • The effectiveness of the ontological argument for God's existence. • Whether the ontological argument is more persuasive than the cosmological/teleological arguments for God's existence. • The effectiveness of the challenges to the ontological argument for God's existence. • The extent to which objections to the ontological argument are persuasive.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief - the problem of evil and suffering **This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.**

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	**The problem of evil and suffering:** The types of evil: moral (caused by free will agents) and natural (caused by nature). The logical problem of evil: classical (Epicurus) - the problem of suffering. J. L. Mackie's modern development - the nature of the problem of evil (inconsistent triad). William Rowe (intense human and animal suffering) and Gregory S. Paul (premature deaths).
B.	**Religious responses to the problem of evil (i):** **Augustinian type theodicy:** Evil as a consequence of sin: evil as a privation; the fall of human beings and creation; the Cross overcomes evil, soul-deciding; challenges to Augustinian type theodicies: validity of accounts in Genesis, Chapters 2 and 3; scientific error - biological impossibility of human descent from a single pair (therefore invalidating the 'inheritance of Adam's sin'); moral contradictions of omnibenevolent God and existence of Hell; contradiction of perfect order becoming chaotic - geological and biological evidence suggests the contrary.
C.	**Religious responses to the problem of evil (ii):** **Irenaean type theodicy:** Vale of soul-making: human beings created imperfect; epistemic distance; second-order goods; eschatological justification; challenges to Irenaean type theodicies: concept of universal salvation unjust; evil and suffering should not be used as a tool by an omnibenevolent God; immensity of suffering and unequal distribution of evil and suffering.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • The extent to which the classical form of the problem of evil is a problem. • The degree to which modern problem of evil arguments are effective in proving God's non-existence. • Whether Augustinian type theodicies are relevant in the 21st Century. • The extent to which Augustine's theodicy succeeds as a defence of the God of Classical Theism. • Whether Irenaean type theodicies are credible in the 21st Century. • The extent to which Irenaeus's theodicy succeeds as a defence of the God of Classical Theism.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief - Religious belief as a product of the human mind **This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.**

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

D.	**Religious belief as a product of the human mind – Sigmund Freud:** Religion as an illusion and/or a neurosis with reference to collective neurosis; primal horde; Oedipus complex; wish fulfilment and reaction against helplessness. Supportive evidence including reference to redirection of guilt complexes and reference to instinctive desires deriving from evolutionary basis (Charles Darwin). Challenges including lack of anthropological evidence for primal horde; no firm psychological evidence for universal Oedipus complex; evidence basis too narrow.
E.	**Religious belief as a product of the human mind – Carl Jung:** Religion necessary for personal growth with reference to: collective unconscious; individuation; archetypes; the God within. Supportive evidence including recognition of religion as a source of comfort and promotion of positive personal and social mindsets arising from religious belief. Challenges including lack of empirical evidence for Jungian concepts and reductionist views regarding religious belief arising from acceptance of Jung's ideas.
F.	**Issues relating to rejection of religion:** **Atheism:** Rejection of belief in deities; the difference between agnosticism and atheism; the rise of New Atheism (antitheism); its main criticisms of religion: non-thinking; infantile worldview; impedes scientific progress. Religious responses to the challenge of New Atheism: rejection by religious groups of New Atheist claims regarding incompatibility of science and religion; increase in fundamentalist religious activity relating to morality and community; increase in religious apologists in media.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • How far religious belief can be considered a neurosis. • The adequacy of Freud's explanation of religious belief. • The extent to which Jung was more positive than Freud about the idea of God. • The effectiveness of empirical approaches as critiques of Jungian views on religion. • The success of atheistic arguments against religious belief. • The extent to which religious responses to New Atheism have been successful.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 3: Religious Experience
This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
A.	**The nature of religious experience with particular reference to:** Visions – sensory; intellectual; dreams. Conversion – individual/communal; sudden/gradual. Mysticism – transcendent; ecstatic and unitive. Prayer – types and stages of prayer according to Teresa of Avila.
B.	**Mystical experience:** **William James' four characteristics of mystical experience**: ineffable, noetic, transient and passive. **Rudolf Otto** – the concept of the numinous; *mysterium tremendum;* the human predisposition for religious experience.
C.	**Challenges to the objectivity and authenticity of religious experience:** With reference to Caroline Franks Davis (description-related; subject-related and object-related challenges). Claims of religious experience rejected on grounds of misunderstanding; claims delusional - possibly related to substance misuse, fantastical claims contrary to everyday experiences. Challenges: individual experiences valid even if non-verifiable; claims could be genuine - integrity of individual; one-off experiences can still be valid even if never repeated.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
• The impact of religious experiences upon religious belief and practice. • Whether different types of religious experience can be accepted as equally valid in communicating religious teachings and beliefs. • The adequacy of James' four characteristics in defining mystical experience. • The adequacy of Otto's definition of 'numinous'. • The extent to which the challenges to religious experience are valid. • The persuasiveness of Franks-Davis's different challenges.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

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Theme 3: Religious experience

This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

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Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

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The influence of religious experience on religious practice and faith:

Value for religious community including: affirmation of belief system; promotion of faith value system; strengthening cohesion of religious community.

Value for individual including faith restoring; strengthening faith in face of opposition; renewal of commitment to religious ideals and doctrines.

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Miracles the definitions of:

St Thomas Aquinas (miracles different from the usual order), David Hume (transgression of a law of nature),
R.F. Holland (contingency miracle), Richard Swinburne (religious significance).

Consideration of reasons why religious believers accept that miracles occur: evidence from sacred writings; affirmation of faith traditions; personal experience.

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A comparative study of two key scholars from within and outside the Christian tradition and their contrasting views on the possibility of miracles:

David Hume – his scepticism of miracles including challenges relating to testimony based belief; credibility of witnesses; susceptibility of belief; contradictory nature of faith claims.

Richard Swinburne – his defence of miracles, including definitions of natural laws and contradictions of Hume's arguments regarding contradictory nature of faith claims and credibility of witnesses.

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Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The impact of religious experiences upon religious belief and practice.
- Whether religious communities are entirely dependent on religious experiences.
- The adequacy of different definitions of miracles.
- How far different definitions of miracles can be considered as contradictory.
- The effectiveness of the challenges to belief in miracles.
- The extent to which Swinburne's responses to Hume can be accepted as valid.

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Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 4: Religious language
This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

A.	**Inherent problems of religious language:** Limitations of language for traditional conceptions of God such as infinite and timeless; challenge to sacred texts and religious pronouncements as unintelligible; challenge that religious language is not a common shared base and experience; the differences between cognitive and non-cognitive language.
B.	**Religious language as cognitive, but meaningless:** Logical Positivism - Verification (A. J. Ayer) – religious ethical language as meaningless; there can be no way in which we could verify the truth or falsehood of the propositions (e.g. God is good, murder is wrong); falsification nothing can counter the belief (Antony Flew). Criticisms of verification: the verification principle cannot itself be verified; neither can historical events; universal scientific statements; the concept of eschatological verification goes against this. Criticisms of falsification: Richard Hare – bliks (the way that a person views the world gives meaning to them even if others do not share the same view); Basil Mitchell – partisan and the stranger (certain things can be meaningful even when they cannot be falsified); Swinburne – toys in the cupboard (concept meaningful even though falsifying the statement is not possible).
C.	**Religious language as non-cognitive and analogical**: Proportion and attribution (St Thomas Aquinas) and qualifier and disclosure (Ian Ramsey). Challenges including how far analogies can give meaningful insights into religious language. A consideration of how these two views (Aquinas/Ramsey) can be used to help understand religious teachings.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
- The solutions presented by religious philosophers for the inherent problems of using religious language.   - The exclusive context of religious belief for an understanding of religious language.   - The persuasiveness of arguments asserting either the meaningfulness or meaninglessness of religious language.   - How far Logical Positivism should be accepted as providing a valid criterion for meaning in the use of language.   - To what extent do the challenges to Logical Positivism provide convincing arguments to non-religious believers.   - Whether non-cognitive interpretations are valid responses to the challenges to the meaning of religious language.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Theme 4: Religious language
This theme considers how the philosophy of religion has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices.

	Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief
D.	**Religious language as non-cognitive and symbolic:** Functions of symbols (John Randall); God as that which concerns us ultimately (Paul Tillich). Challenges including whether a symbol is adequate or gives the right insights. A consideration of how these two views (Randall/Tillich) can be used to help understand religious teachings.
E.	**Religious language as non-cognitive and mythical:** Complex form of mythical language that communicates values and insights into purpose of existence. Supportive evidence – different forms of myths to convey meaning: creation myths; myths of good against evil; heroic myths. Myths help to overcome fears of the unknown; myths effective way of transmitting religious, social and ethical values. Challenges: problem of competing myths; meanings of myths change over time as they reflect the values of society as societal constructs; demythologisation of myths results in varying interpretations, myths often incompatible with scientific understanding of the world.
F.	**Religious language as a language game:** Meaningful to people who participate in same language game (Ludwig Wittgenstein). Supportive evidence – non-cognitive form of language provides meaning to participants within language game; consider use of language not meaning; language games fit with coherence theory of truth; religious language as expressions of belief. Challenges, including rejection of any true propositions in religion that can be empirically verified; does not allow for meaningful conversations between different groups of language users; does not provide adequate meaning for the word 'God'.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
- The effectiveness of the terms non-cognitive, analogical and mythical as solutions to the problems of religious language.   - The relevance of religious language issues in the 21st Century.   - The extent to which language games provide a suitable way of resolving the problems of religious language.   - Whether symbolic language can be agreed as having adequate meaning as a form of language.   - How far the works of Randall and Tillich provide a suitable counter-challenge to Logical Positivism.   - Whether the strengths of language games outweigh the weaknesses.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Theme 1: Ethical Thought
This theme considers how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices and the philosophy of religion.

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

A.	**Divine Command Theory:** Meta-ethical theory - God as the origin and regulator of morality; right or wrong as objective truths based on God's will/command, moral goodness is achieved by complying with divine command; divine command a requirement of God's omnipotence; divine command as an objective meta-physical foundation for morality. Robert Adams' 'Modified Divine Command Theory' (divine command based on God's omnibenevolence). **Challenges:** the Euthyphro dilemma (inspired by Plato); arbitrariness problem (divine command theory renders morality as purely arbitrary); pluralism objection (different religions claim different divine commands).
B.	**Virtue Theory:** Ethical system based on defining the personal qualities that make a person moral; the focus on a person's character rather than their specific actions; Aristotle's moral virtues (based on the deficiency; the excess and the mean); Jesus' teachings on virtues (the Beatitudes). **Challenges:** virtues are not a practical guide to moral behaviour; issue of cultural relativism (ideas on the good virtues are not universal); virtues can be used for immoral acts.
C.	**Ethical Egoism:** Normative agent focused ethic based on self-interest as opposed to altruism; ethical theory that matches the moral agent's psychological state (psychological egoism); concentration on long term self-interests rather than short term interests; Max Stirner, self-interest as the root cause of every human action even if it appears altruistic; rejection of egoism for material gain; union of egoists. **Challenges:** destruction of a community ethos; social injustices could occur as individuals put their own interests first; a form of bigotry (why is one moral agent more important than any other?).

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
- Whether morality is what God commands.   - Whether being a good person is better than just doing good deeds.   - Whether Virtue Theory is useful when faced with a moral dilemma.   - The extent to which ethical egoism inevitably leads to moral evil.   - The extent to which all moral actions are motivated by self-interest.   - Whether one of Divine Command Theory, Virtue Theory or Ethical Egoism is superior to the other theories.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Theme 1: Ethical Thought	
This theme considers how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices and the philosophy of religion.	
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	

D.	**Meta-ethical approaches - Naturalism:** Objective moral laws exist independently of human beings, moral terms can be understood by analysing the natural world; ethical statements are cognitivist and can be verified or falsified; verified moral statements are objective truths and universal. F.H. Bradley - ethical sentences express propositions; objective features of the world make propositions true or false; meta-ethical statements can be seen in scientific terms. **Challenges**: Hume's Law (the is-ought problem); Moore's Naturalistic Fallacy (moral language is indefinable); the Open Question Argument (moral facts cannot be reduced to natural properties).
E.	**Meta-ethical approaches - Intuitionism:** Objective moral laws exist independently of human beings; moral truths can be discovered by using our minds in an intuitive way; intuitive ability is innate and the same for all moral agents; intuition needs a mature mind so not infallible; allows for objective moral values. H.A. Prichard, 'ought to do' has no definition; recognise what we 'ought to do' by intuition; two ways of thinking (general and moral). **Challenges**: no proof of moral intuition exists; intuitive 'truths' can differ widely; no obvious way to resolve conflicting intuitions.
F.	**Meta-ethical approaches – Emotivism:** Theory that believes objective moral laws do not exist; a non-cognitivist theory; moral terms express personal emotional attitudes and not propositions; ethical terms are just expressions of personal approval (hurrah) or disapproval (boo); explains why people disagree about morality. A.J. Ayer - ethical statements are neither verifiable nor analytic; made to express joy or pain (emotion); expressed to be persuasive; emotivism is not subjectivism. **Challenges**: no basic moral principles can be established; ethical debate becomes a pointless activity; there is no universal agreement that some actions are wrong.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • Whether ethical and non-ethical statements are the same. • The extent to which ethical statements are not objective. • Whether moral terms are intuitive. • The extent to which moral terms are just expressions of our emotions. • Whether one of Naturalism, Intuitionism or Emotivism is superior to the other theories. • The extent to which the different meta-ethical theories encourage moral debate.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

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Theme 2: Deontological Ethics

This theme considers how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices and the philosophy of religion.

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Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

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<tr><td>A.</td><td>

St Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law - laws and precepts as the basis of morality:

Aquinas' four levels of law (eternal, divine, natural and human); Natural Law derived from rational thought; based on a belief in a divine creator (the highest good as being the rational understanding of God's final purpose). Natural Law as a form of moral absolutism and a theory which has both deontological and teleological aspects. The five primary precepts (preservation of life, ordered society, worship of God, education and reproduction of the human species) as derived from rational thought and based on the premise of 'doing good and avoiding evil'; the secondary precepts which derive from the primary precepts; the importance of keeping the precepts in order to establish a right relationship with God and gain eternal life with God in heaven.

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Aquinas' Natural Law - the role of virtues and goods in supporting moral behaviour:

The need for humans to be more God-like by developing the three revealed virtues (faith, hope and charity) and four cardinal virtues (fortitude, temperance, prudence and justice). Aquinas' definition of different types of acts and goods: internal acts (the intention of the moral agent when carrying out an action) and external acts (the actions of a moral agent); real goods (correctly reasoned goods that help the moral agent achieve their telos) and apparent goods (wrongly reasoned goods that don't help the moral agent achieve their God given purpose).

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Aquinas' Natural Law - application of the theory:

The application of Aquinas' Natural Law to both of the issues listed below:

1. abortion
2. voluntary euthanasia

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Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The degree to which human law should be influenced by Aquinas' Natural Law.
- The extent to which the absolutist and/or deontological nature of Aquinas' Natural Law works in contemporary society.
- The strengths and weaknesses of Aquinas' Natural Law.
- A consideration of whether Aquinas' Natural Law promotes injustice.
- The effectiveness of Aquinas' Natural Law in dealing with ethical issues.
- The extent to which Aquinas' Natural Law is meaningless without a belief in a creator God.

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Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Theme 2:   Deontological Ethics
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Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

D.	**John Finnis' development of Natural Law:** Development of the seven basic human goods (life, knowledge, friendship, play, aesthetic experience, practical reasonableness and religion); distinction between theoretical / practical reason; Nine Requirements of Practical Reason (view life as a whole, prioritise certain goods over others, basic goods apply equally to all, do not become obsessed with a particular project, use effort to improve, plan your actions to do the most good, never harm a basic good, foster common good in the community and act in your own conscience and authority); the common good and the need for authority.
E.	**Bernard Hoose's Proportionalism:** As a hybrid of Natural Law, a deontological / teleological ethic; Hoose's proportionalist maxim ('it is never right to go against a principle unless there is a proportionate reason which would justify it'); distinction between an evil moral act (an immoral act) and a pre-moral/ontic evil act (a bad act that in itself is not immoral); distinction between a right act (an act that follows the moral rule) and a good act (an act that is not a right act, but creates the lesser of two evils); proportionality based on agape.
F.	**Finnis' Natural Law and Hoose's Proportionalism: application of the theory:** The application of Finnis' Natural Law and Hoose's Proportionalism to both of the issues listed below: 1. immigration 2. capital punishment

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • Whether Finnis' Natural Law is acceptable in contemporary society. • The extent to which Hoose's Proportionalism promotes immoral behaviour. • Whether Finnis and/or Hoose provide a basis for moral decision making for believers and/or non-believers. • The strengths and weaknesses of Finnis' Natural Law and/or Hoose's Proportionalism. • The effectiveness of Finnis' Natural Law and/or Hoose's Proportionalism in dealing with ethical issues. • The extent to which Finnis' Natural Law is a better ethic than Hoose's Proportionalism or vice versa.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

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Theme 3: Teleological ethics

This theme considers how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices and the philosophy of religion.

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Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

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<td>A.</td>
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Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics - his rejection of other forms of ethics and his acceptance of agape as the basis of morality:

Fletcher's rejection of other approaches within ethics: legalism, antinomianism and the role of conscience; Fletcher's rationale for using the religious concept of 'agape' (selfless love) as the 'middle way' between the extremes of legalism and antinomianism; the biblical evidence used to support this approach: the teachings of Jesus (Luke 10:25:37) and St Paul (1 Corinthians 13). Situation Ethics as a form of moral relativism, a consequentialist and teleological theory.

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Fletcher's Situation Ethics - the principles as a means of assessing morality:

The boss principle of Situation Ethics (following the concept of agape); the four working principles (pragmatism, relativism, positivism and personalism); the six fundamental principles (love is the only good, love is the ruling norm of Christianity, love equals justice, love for all, loving ends justify the means and love decides situationally).

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<td>C.</td>
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Fletcher's Situation Ethics - application of theory:

The application of Fletcher's Situation Ethics to both of the issues listed below:

    1.   homosexual relationships
    2.   polyamorous relationships

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Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:

- The degree to which agape is the only intrinsic good.
- Whether Fletchers' Situation Ethics promotes immoral behaviour.
- The extent to which Situation Ethics promotes justice.
- The effectiveness of Situation Ethics in dealing with ethical issues.
- Whether agape should replace religious rules.
- The extent to which Situation Ethics provides a practical basis for making moral decisions for both religious believers and non-believers.

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Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Theme 3: Teleological ethics
Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief

D.	**Classical Utilitarianism - Jeremy Bentham's Act Utilitarianism: happiness as the basis of morality:** Bentham's theory of 'utility' or 'usefulness'; ultimate aim is to pursue pleasure and avoid pain; principle of utility ('the greatest happiness for the greatest number'). The hedonic calculus as a means of measuring pleasure in each unique moral situation; by considering seven factors: intensity, duration, certainty, remoteness, fecundity, purity and extent. Act Utilitarianism as a form of moral relativism, a consequentialist and teleological theory.
E.	**John Stuart Mill's development of Utilitarianism: types of pleasure, the harm principle and the use of rules:** Mill's idea that not all pleasure is the same: 'higher pleasures' (intellectual) are superior to 'lower pleasures' (basic physical pleasure); the 'Harm Principle': the actions of individuals should be limited to prevent harm to other individuals; not all actions need to be morally assessed as actions are morally right if they conform to a historical rule that has demonstrated that it fulfils the principle of utility (now known as 'Rule' Utilitarianism). Mill's Utilitarianism as a teleological/deontological hybrid.

F.	**Bentham's Act Utilitarianism and Mill's Rule Utilitarianism - application of the theory:**
	
	The application of Bentham's Act Utilitarianism and Mill's Rule Utilitarianism to both of the issues listed below:
	
	    1. animal experimentation for medical research
	    2. the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as:
• The degree to which pleasure can be seen as the sole intrinsic good. • The extent to which Act and/or Rule Utilitarianism works in contemporary society. • The extent to which Rule Utilitarianism provides a better basis for making moral decisions than Act Utilitarianism. • Whether Utilitarianism promotes immoral behaviour. • The extent to which Utilitarianism promotes justice. • The extent to which Utilitarianism provides a practical basis for making moral decisions for both religious believers and non-believers.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Theme 4: Determinism and Free will – Determinism **This theme considers how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices and the philosophy of religion.**	

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	

A.	**Religious concepts of predestination, with reference to the teachings of:** **St Augustine:** Doctrine of Original Sin: role of concupiscence, humanity as "a lump of sin" (massa peccati), an essentially 'free' human nature (liberium abitrium), the loss of human liberty (libertas) to our sinful nature, God's grace and atonement for the elect / saints. **John Calvin:** Doctrine of Election: the absolute power of God, the corrupted nature of humans, the Elect and the Reprobates, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the elect.
B.	**Concepts of determinism:** Hard determinism: philosophical (John Locke - free will is an illusion, man in bedroom illustration), scientific (biological determinism - human behaviour is controlled by an individual's genes), psychological (Ivan Pavlov - classical conditioning). Soft determinism: Thomas Hobbes (internal and external causes), A.J. Ayer (caused acts v forced acts).
C.	**The implications of predestination / determinism:** The implications of determinism (hard and soft) on moral responsibility: the worth of human ideas of rightness, wrongness and moral value, the value in blaming moral agents for immoral acts, the usefulness of normative ethics. The implications of predestination on religious belief: the link between God and evil, the implications for God's omnipotence and omnibenevolence, the use of prayer and the existence of miracles.

Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • A consideration of whether religious believers should accept predestination. • The extent to which God predestines humanity. • The extent to which philosophical, scientific and/or psychological determinism illustrate that humanity has no free will. • Strengths and weaknesses of Hard and/or Soft Determinism. • Whether moral responsibility is an illusion. • The extent to which pre-destination influences our understanding of God.

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Theme 4: Determinism and Free will – Free will
This theme considers how the study of ethics has, over time, influenced and been influenced by developments in religious beliefs and practices and the philosophy of religion.

Knowledge and understanding of religion and belief	
D.	**Religious concepts of free will**, with reference to the teachings of: **Pelagius:** The role of original sin, humanity maturing in God's image and accepting the responsibility of free will, free will as used to follow God's laws, the role of grace in salvation. **Arminius:** Denial of predestination, the effect of original sin on free will, God's 'prevenient' grace (the Holy Spirit) in allowing humans to exercise free will, the Elect and the possibility of rejecting God's grace, the election of believers being conditional on faith.
E.	**Concepts of libertarianism:** Philosophical (Jean Paul Sartre: man is not free not to be free, waiter illustration), scientific (Angela Sirigu: free floating DNA in the brain allows for free will), psychological (Carl Rogers: humanist approach, self-actualisation).
F.	**The implications of libertarianism and free will:** The implications of libertarianism on moral responsibility: the worth of human ideas of rightness, wrongness and moral value, the value in blaming moral agents for immoral acts, the usefulness of normative ethics. The implications of free will on religious belief: the link between God and evil, the implications for God's omnipotence and omnibenevolence, the use of prayer and the existence of miracles.
Issues for analysis and evaluation will be drawn from any aspect of the content above, such as: • How convincing are religious views on free will. • The extent to which an individual has free choice. • The extent to which philosophical, scientific and/or psychological views on libertarianism inevitably lead people to accept libertarianism. • The extent to which free moral agents should follow a normative ethic. • The degree to which free will makes the use of prayer irrelevant. • The degree to which beliefs about free will can be reconciled with beliefs about predestination.	