



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2026

Religious Education

Higher Level

Tuesday 23 June Afternoon 2:00 – 4:30

Total Marks 320

General Directions for Candidates

Candidates must answer the following —

- **One** Question from Unit One
- **Two** Sections from Unit Two
- **One** Section from Unit Three

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Unit One

You must answer parts (a) and (b) from **one** of the following two questions.

(All questions carry 80 marks each)

Section A The Search for Meaning and Values

(80 marks)

Question 1

Answer (a) and (b).



- (a) Profile how **one** idea taught by Aristotle in Ancient Greece contributed to the development of philosophy. (40)
- (b) Explain why an idea put forward by Aristotle could help a person today in their search for the meaning of life. (40)

Question 2

Answer (a) and (b).

- (a) Describe the understandings of God/gods that can be seen in **two** myths associated with people who lived in ancient times. (40)
- (b) Evaluate the main arguments for the existence of God put forward by each of the following: (40)
- Anselm
 - Aquinas

Unit Two

You must answer **two** of the following three sections.

(All sections carry 80 marks each)

Section B Christianity: Origins and Contemporary Expressions (80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) (i) Explain **two** reasons why the teaching of Jesus challenged the Jewish religious authorities of his time in Palestine. (20)
- (ii) Assess how the message of Jesus posed a threat to the Roman rulers in Palestine at the time he lived. (20)
- (b) Compare the understanding of Jesus put forward by **two** writers of books about Christology that you have studied. (40)
- (c) Examine the tensions experienced within **one** of the following early Christian communities in living out the teaching of Jesus at the time it was first established: (40)
- Corinth
 - Philippi
 - Thessalonica

Section C World Religions (80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) Profile the origins and main beliefs of **one** of the following: (40)
- An African Traditional Religion
 - A New Religious Movement
 - Baha'i Faith
 - Chinese Religion
 - Sikh Religion
- (b) Compare the understanding of salvation/liberation found in the teaching of **two** of the following religions: (40)
- Buddhism
 - Christianity
 - Hinduism
 - Islam
 - Judaism
- (c) Describe **two** examples of how ordinary objects are used, in a way that expresses a sense of the 'sacred', by members in a major world religion. (40)

Section D Moral Decision-Making (80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) Outline the understanding of right and wrong put forward in the teachings of **two** of the following religions: (40)
- Buddhism
 - Hinduism
 - Islam
 - Judaism
- (b) Describe how **each** of the following could inform a person's conscience in a moral situation: (40)
- Civil Authority
 - Religious Authority
- (c) Discuss the role that **each** of the following play in a person's growth towards moral maturity: (40)
- Moral Freedom
 - Virtue

Unit Three

You must answer **one** of the following four sections.

(All sections carry 80 marks each)

Section E Religion and Gender

(80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) (i) Discuss how feminist theology has re-examined the role women play in a Christian denomination you have studied. (40)
- or
- (ii) Explain **two** reasons why feminist spiritualities developed within religious traditions. (40)
- (b) Compare the role played by women in **two** of the following religions:
 • Buddhism • Christianity • Hinduism • Islam • Judaism (40)
- (c) Assess how **two** of the following have influenced a change in the understanding of the roles of men and women in society today:
 • Biology • Philosophy • Psychology • Sociology (40)

Section F Issues of Justice and Peace

(80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) Describe the understanding of justice and peace that is expressed in **two** of the following religious teachings:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| • The Eightfold Path of Buddhism | • The Four Varnas of Hinduism |
| • The Judaeo-Christian vision of justice | • The Zakat of Islam |

(40)



- (b) Analyse how an individual you have studied has contributed to the 'greening' of religion by promoting environmental awareness. (40)
- (c) Profile how care for the environment is promoted in **two** of the following teachings:
 • Sabbath, Schmittah and Jubilee in Judaism • The Creation Texts in Genesis
 • The Five Precepts of the Buddha • Viceregents of the Earth in Islam (40)

Section G Worship, Prayer and Ritual

(80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) Discuss how **each** of the following can help people to express their religious faith in the world today:
● Ritual ● Symbol (40)
- (b) Describe the way an event from the story of a religion is marked during a time that is sacred in **two** of the following religions:
● Buddhism ● Christianity ● Hinduism ● Islam ● Judaism (40)
- (c) (i) Describe how religious belief is expressed in an example of a formal prayer from a Christian denomination you have studied. (20)
- (ii) Outline how religious belief is expressed in an example from a traditional prayer associated with **one** of the following religions:
● Buddhism ● Hinduism ● Islam ● Judaism (20)

Section H The Bible: Literature and Sacred Texts

(80 marks)

Answer any two of parts: (a), (b), (c).

- (a) Profile how **two** archaeological discoveries have contributed to the way in which the Bible is understood today. (40)
- (b) Discuss the role that redaction or editorial tradition played in the development of **two** of the following texts:
● Chronicler's History ● The Deuteronomic History ● The Torah (40)
- (c) Describe the role symbolic language plays in **two** of the following examples of Biblical literature:
● Apocalypse ● Epic ● Myth (40)



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Acknowledgements

Images

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