



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2025

Religious Education

Ordinary Level

Tuesday 24 June Afternoon 2:00 – 4:00

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 three questions.

(All questions carry 80 marks each)

Section A The Search for Meaning and Values

(80 marks)

Question 1 The Tradition of the Search

Answer (a) and (b).

- (a) Imagine Socrates was alive and accepted an invitation to talk to your class about finding the true meaning of life.

Outline **one** idea from his philosophical thinking that Socrates might talk about to help people searching for the meaning of life.



(40)

- (b) Explain how **one** myth from ancient times that you have studied attempts to answer a question about the meaning of life.

(40)

Question 2 The Search for Meaning Today

Answer (a) and (b).

- (a) Describe **two** examples which show that people today have an interest in spirituality. (40)

- (b) (i) Outline **one** difference between the response of agnosticism and the response of atheism to a question about the existence of God. (20)

- (ii) In the case of either atheism or agnosticism, describe how this view might influence a person's search for the meaning of life today. (20)

Question 3 Concepts of God

Answer (a) and (b).

- (a) Outline the understanding of God/gods that can be seen in **one** ancient myth that you have studied. (40)

- (b) Explain a similarity and a difference in the understanding of divine revelation that is found in the teaching of **two** of the following religions:

● Christianity ● Islam ● Judaism (40)

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) Examine the main features of Christian living that were emphasised by Saint Paul in his writings to **one** of the following first Christian communities:
- Corinth
 - Philippi
 - Thessalonica
- (40)
- (b) Outline the evidence for the existence of Jesus of Nazareth presented in the writings of **two** of the following:
- Josephus
 - Pliny the Younger
 - Saint Paul
 - Tacitus
- (40)
- (c) (i) Describe **one** example of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God that upset some of the Jewish religious leaders of his time. (20)
- (ii) Explain why the Jewish religious leaders were upset by Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God. (20)

Section C World Religions (80 marks)

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

- (a) Examine the role played in primal religion by any **two** of the following:
- Mana
 - Shaman
 - Tabu
 - Totem
- (40)
- (b) Outline the way in which a key moment in life is marked in a religious rite by members of **one** of the following religions:
- Buddhism
 - Christianity
 - Hinduism
 - Islam
 - Judaism
- (40)
- (c) Describe a difference in the understanding of salvation/liberation found in a religion from List A and a religion from List B below:
- List A: ● Christianity ● Judaism
- List B: ● Buddhism ● Hinduism ● Islam
- (40)

Section D Moral Decision-Making (80 marks)

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

- (a) Explain how **one** of the religious moral codes listed below could guide someone in deciding what is right and wrong: ● The Decalogue ● Jesus - 'Law of Love' (40)
- (b) Describe **two** stages of moral development a person might go through on their way to becoming morally mature. (40)
- (c) Outline the understanding of sin and reconciliation found in **one** Christian denomination you have studied. (40)

Unit Three

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

(All sections carry 80 marks each)

Section F Issues of Justice and Peace

(80 marks)

Answer part (a) or (b).

- (a)
- Justice as fair play
 - Justice as the upholding of human rights
 - Justice as retribution
 - Justice as right relationship
- (i) Describe what is involved in **one** of the above approaches to justice. (40)
- (ii) Explain the main strength and weakness of the approach to justice that you described in part F (a), (i) above. (40)

or

- (b) (i) 'Structural violence happens when the laws and/or systems of a society are unfair and do harm to people.'
- Outline **one** example of structural violence that you have studied. (40)
- (ii) ● Non-violence as protest ● Non-violence as lifestyle
- Outline how **one** of the above types of non-violence could be an effective response to an example of structural violence. (40)

Section G Worship, Prayer and Ritual

(80 marks)

Answer part (a) or (b).

- (a) (i) Outline how **one** of the following contemplative traditions has changed over time.
- Hermitage
 - Pilgrimage
 - Poustinia
 - Retreat
- (40)
- (ii) Explain why any **two** of the contemplative traditions in part G (a), (i) above have appeal for people today. (40)

or

- (b) (i) Describe a ritual used in worship that shows how a day or season is sacred in **one** of the following religions:
- Buddhism
 - Christianity
 - Hinduism
 - Islam
 - Judaism
- (40)
- (ii) Explain why the act of worship, marking a day or season as sacred that you have described in part G (b), (i) above, is important for people who are living by their faith today. (40)

Section I Religion and the Irish Experience

(80 marks)

Answer part (a) or (b).

- (a) (i) Describe **one** way in which an archaeological discovery found in Ireland shows evidence of Pre-Christian religious belief. (40)
- (ii) Outline **one** example of a Pre-Christian practice that was adapted by Christians in Ireland around the time of Saint Patrick. (40)
- or
- (b) (i) Outline **one** key feature of the pattern of religious practice found in Ireland today. (40)
- (ii) Identify a similarity and a difference between the pattern of religious practice in Ireland today with the pattern of religious practice found elsewhere in Europe today. (40)

Section J Religion and Science

(80 marks)

Answer part (a) or (b).



- (a) (i) Outline a story about the creation of the universe/natural world that is associated with **one** of the following religions: (40)
- Buddhism ● Christianity ● Hinduism ● Islam ● Judaism
- (ii) Explain **two** ways in which Descartes' ideas had an impact on the relationship between religion and science. (40)
- or
- (b) (i) Outline how the message in a story about the creation of the universe/natural world from **one** religion listed below could influence the members of that religion to care for the environment. (40)
- Buddhism ● Christianity ● Hinduism ● Islam ● Judaism
- (ii) Explain **two** reasons why Darwin's theory of evolution caused conflict between religion and science. (40)

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Acknowledgements

Images

Image on page 2: https://etc.usf.edu/clipart/1200/1261/socrates_2htm

Image on page 5: https://stock.adobe.com/ie/search?k=earth+clipart+asset_id=170537083

Texts

Text on page 4: Adapted from Religious Education Leaving Certificate Ordinary and Higher Level Guidelines for Teachers © 2005 Government of Ireland ISBN 0 – 7557 – 1378 – 8 p.62.

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