



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit  
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2023

# Religious Education

Higher Level

Tuesday 27 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

Do not hand up this question paper.  
This document will not be returned to the  
State Examinations Commission.

## Unit One

You must answer **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) (i) Imagine Plato was giving a talk about the nature of reality for people today.

From your knowledge of Plato's ideas about the nature of reality outline **one** point that you think he would emphasise for people today.

(20)



- (ii) Explain why you think Plato would emphasise for people today the point about the nature of reality outlined in part (a), (i) above.

(20)

- (b) (i) Outline a key idea that was taught by **one** person associated with the development of the humanist tradition.

(20)

- (ii) Profile how a humanist idea could help people searching for the meaning of life in the world today.

(20)

#### Question 2

Answer (a) and (b).

- (a) Using examples, trace how the religious practice of believers is influenced by the understanding of divine revelation in **two** major world religions that you have studied.

(40)

- (b) Explain **two** reasons why people could become indifferent to the search for the meaning of life in the world today. (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) (i) Outline the understanding of Jesus of Nazareth presented today in an example from **one** of the following: ● Art ● Film ● Music (20)
- (ii) Explain why the understanding of Jesus that you have outlined in part (a), (i) above is relevant for Christians today. (20)
- (b) Describe **two** examples of the different ways that Jesus of Nazareth taught his followers about the Kingdom of God through his words and actions. (40)
- (c) Profile how **one** Christian denomination is trying to carry on the mission of Jesus through their work in the world today. (40)

### Section C World Religions (80 marks)

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

- (a) (i) Trace how the influence of **two** ideas associated with primal religion can be seen in a major world religion that you have studied. (20)
- (ii) The number of different religions in Ireland has increased in recent years. Describe **another** trend within religion in Ireland that has emerged in recent years. (20)
- (b) Compare how the founding stories of **one** religion from LIST A and **one** religion from LIST B below are recalled today in religious festivals:  
List A: ● Christianity ● Judaism List B: ● Buddhism ● Hinduism ● Islam (40)
- (c) Outline how inter-faith dialogue could play a role in helping to resolve a conflict situation that you have studied. (40)

### Section D Moral Decision-Making (80 marks)

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

- (a) Describe an example of the moral issues that were a concern for people living in **each** of the following ancient civilisations: ● The Hebrews ● The Romans (40)
- (b) ● Buddhism ● Hinduism ● Islam ● Judaism  
Choose **two** of the above religions and trace how a basic principle from their teaching could influence their members' understanding of what is right and wrong behaviour in a situation. (40)
- (c) Explain how having an informed conscience could guide a person to behave in a morally mature way in a decision-making situation. (40)

## 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 one of parts: (a), (b), (c), (d).

- (a) Describe **two** examples of how an image of God is reflected in the roles played by men and women within salvation history, as outlined in the Hebrew Scriptures. (80)

or

- (b) (i) Describe what happened during an encounter between Jesus and a woman that is outlined in **one** of the following Gospels:
- The Gospel of John
  - The Gospel of Luke
  - The Gospel of Mark
  - The Gospel of Matthew
- (40)

- (ii) Explain the implications that the encounter described in part (b), (i) above has for Christians today. (40)

or

- (c) Examine the difference in the way Mary, the mother of Jesus, is portrayed in **two** of the following Gospels:
- The Gospel of John
  - The Gospel of Luke
  - The Gospel of Mark
  - The Gospel of Matthew
- (80)

or

- (d) Describe examples from a Christian tradition of how a person's gender could affect their experience of the following:
- Empowerment or Freedom
  - Exclusion or Oppression
- (80)

### Section F Issues of Justice and Peace

(80 marks)

Answer (a) or (b).

- (a) Justice can be understood as –
- Fair Play
  - The Promotion of Equality



Explain the main strengths and weaknesses that **each** of the above understandings of justice have in promoting good relationships between people. (80)

or

- (b) ● Buddhism ● Christianity ● Hinduism ● Islam ● Judaism

Using examples, describe how the teaching of **two** of the above religions could influence their members to work for peace in the world today. (80)

**Section G      Worship, Prayer and Ritual**

**(80 marks)**

**Answer (a) or (b).**

**(a) (i)** ‘Symbols are powerful because they are the visible signs of invisible realities.’  
Discuss the evidence for this statement, referring to the way symbols are used within the sacrament/sacramental celebrations of **two** Christian denominations today. (40)

**(ii)** ● Reflection    ● Religious Experience  
Using examples, describe the role that **each** of the above can play in the prayer life of people of faith today. (40)

**or**

**(b)** Examine how religious belief is reflected in the features that mark a space as sacred for members of **two** of the following religions:  
● Buddhism    ● Christianity    ● Hinduism    ● Islam    ● Judaism (80)

**Section H      The Bible: Literature and Sacred Text**

**(80 marks)**

**Answer (a) or (b).**

**(a) (i)** Explain **two** reasons why the Psalms can be described as poetry, referring to an acrostic or parallelistic Psalm that you have studied. (40)

**(ii)** Discuss the importance of storytelling in the Bible, referring to the story of Job and its relevance for people of faith today. (40)

**or**

**(b) (i)** Describe **two** examples of how oral traditions are preserved in any of the following Gospels:  
● The Gospel of John    ● The Gospel of Luke  
● The Gospel of Mark    ● The Gospel of Matthew (40)



**(ii)** Using examples, explain how the ‘Q’ document is believed to have played a role in the formation of the synoptic Gospels. (40)

There is no examination material on this page

There is no examination material on this page

## Acknowledgements

### Images

Images on page 2: First Picture: <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.istockphoto.com%2Fillustrations%2Fperson-giving-a-speech-silhouette&psig=AOvVaw2RFGFg0ZAZWr7SyfUruBWC&ust=1674123372952000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CA0QjRxqFwoTCJnxejx0PwCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAW>.

Second Picture: <https://www.istockphoto.com/vector/diverse-crowd-of-people-of-different-ages-and-races-gm1224590709-360139734>.

Image on page 4: <https://www.dreamstime.com/royalty-free-stock-image-hand-holding-scales-justice-image17357286>.

Image on page 5: <https://www.twinkl.ie/illustration/gospels>.

### Texts

Text on page 5: <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1341910>.

Do not hand up this question paper.  
This document will not be returned to the  
State Examinations Commission.

### Copyright notice

This examination paper may contain text or images for which the State Examinations Commission is not the copyright owner, and which may have been adapted, for the purpose of assessment, without the authors' prior consent. This examination paper has been prepared in accordance with *Section 53(5) of the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000*. Any subsequent use for a purpose other than the intended purpose is not authorised. The Commission does not accept liability for any infringement of third-party rights arising from unauthorised distribution or use of this examination paper.

Leaving Certificate – Higher Level

**Religious Education**

Tuesday 27 June

Afternoon 2:00 – 4:30