Aligning the P – 12 Religion Curriculum with the Religion and Ethics Study Area Specification

It is possible for all Archdiocesan Catholic and ecumenical secondary schools to address the requirements of both the P-12 Religion Curriculum (2012) and the Religion and Ethics Study Area Specification (SAS) (2004).

The approaches to the learning, teaching and assessing of Religion taken in both the P-12 Religion Curriculum and the Religion and Ethics SAS are complementary, as they encourage students to think critically, ask questions, gain an understanding of major belief systems and religions, explore their own belief systems and more deeply appreciate what gives ultimate meaning to their lives.

In order to comply with the requirements of both the P-12 Religion Curriculum and the Religion and Ethics SAS, schools may need to review, revise and rewrite their current Religion and Ethics work programs.

Below are listed the requirements of both the P-12 Religion Curriculum (2012) and the Religion and Ethics SAS (2004).


Time Allocation:
“A program of study developed from this study area specification should cater for a minimum of 55 hours per semester of timetabled school time including assessment” (p.5).

Course Organisation
“The structure of the program of study is presented in terms of:
- the study-area core (personal dimension, relational dimension, spiritual dimension)
- elective topics
Schools should select no fewer than four and no more than eight elective topics for a two-year course.” (p.5)

“Schools should:
- select no fewer than four and no more than eight electives
- study each elective for no more than one semester but no less than four weeks to ensure adequate depth
- use the study-area core (the personal, relational and spiritual dimensions) to organise the integration of the concepts into each elective
- vary the emphases on the three dimensions in different electives depending on the elective topic
- ensure a balance of the three dimensions across the course of study, however there may be more emphasis on a particular dimension in any one elective.” (p.6)

**REQUIREMENTS FOR ARCHDIOCESAN P-12 RELIGION CURRICULUM (2012)**

**Time Allocation:**

“A minimum of 2.5 hours per week or 40 hours per semester or 80 hours per year of Religion teaching is provided in both primary and secondary schools. Personal development education, liturgy, prayer, hymn practice and other religious practices are not included in this provision” (p.1).

**SOURCE:** Religious Education Policy, Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane, updated 2001

**Course Organisation:**

*The Archdiocesan P-12 Religion Curriculum* details the essential minimum theological content to be taught in all Archdiocesan Catholic and ecumenical schools as prescribed by the Archbishop.

Core content mandatory for all students is specified and elaborated as content descriptions and elaborations which specify religious knowledge, deep understandings and skills under the four strands and sub-strands for each year level.

- Sacred Texts (Old Testament; New Testament; Christian Spiritual Writings and Wisdom)
- Beliefs (Trinity: God, Jesus the Christ, Spirit; Human Existence; Religions of the World)
- Church (Liturgy and Sacraments; People of God; Church History)
- Christian Life (Moral Formation; Mission and Justice; Prayer and Spirituality)

**SOURCE:** The New Religion Curriculum, Archdiocese of Brisbane, Strategic Plan, 2011 – 2015, pp.3,4
BELIEFS STRAND

In Years 11 and 12, the study of Beliefs in the P – 12 Religion Curriculum aligns with the approach taken in the current Religion and Ethics SAS (2004), namely:

“Students will gain knowledge and understanding of themselves as human beings who ask questions about life … [clarifying] their personal beliefs (personal dimension of human experience). Students develop an understanding of themselves in the context of their family and community … [developing] an awareness and understanding of a variety of religious and ethical perspectives (relational dimension of human experience). Students explore beliefs in reality beyond the normal observable world or in a higher being, power or God. They will gain an understanding of some major belief systems and religions. Students will also explore their own belief systems and more deeply appreciate what gives ultimate meaning to their lives (spiritual dimension of human experience). “

(Religion and Ethics SAS, 2004. pp. 9-10)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALIGNMENT:

The following Elective topics provide an opportunity to address the requirements of both the P-12 Religion Curriculum and the Religion and Ethics SAS.


Religions of the World
Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- What does it mean to be a member of a particular religious tradition?
- How does being part of this religious tradition contribute to a person’s identity?
- What are the guidelines for personal choice?
- What are the key stages in the faith journey of an adherent?
- How do adherents live out their core beliefs in their daily lives?

Relational
- What is the religious basis of ethics in a particular religious tradition?
- How does the experience of pilgrimage strengthen the faith of adherents?
- How did divisions within a particular religious tradition develop and what are their similarities and differences today?
- How does a particular religious tradition interact with culture?
- What is the function of sacred texts in various religious traditions?

Spiritual
- What is the function of prayer, ritual, worship and devotional practices in various religious traditions?
- What are the key tenets of various religious traditions that are reflected in the spiritual lives of believers?
- How are the beliefs of adherents reflected in the sacred spaces?

Sample Learning Experiences
- Invite speakers from a range of religious traditions to talk about what it means to them to be an adherent
- View and examine photographs and websites of sacred spaces of various religions to identify elements of core beliefs
- Research key festivals across a range of religious tradition
- Compile a collection of religious artefacts that reflect beliefs of a particular religious tradition

**Good and Evil**

*Dimensions with key ideas and questions*

**Personal**
- How are the concepts of personal evil and goodness expressed in various religions?
- What are some of the questions raised for me by the presence of evil in life?
- How do my view and experience of good and evil influence my search for meaning and my vision for human life and the world?
- What is it that gives every person a unique and intrinsic beauty, particularly when they are being true to themselves?

**Relational**
- How do ethics, morals and values in religious traditions inform an understanding of good and evil?
- How do different religions respond to suffering and evil in the world?
- Why do people suffer or why do bad things happen to good people?
- Can good come about through suffering?

**Spiritual**
- What images of good and evil can be found in a particular religious tradition?
- Are good and evil experiences chance events or acts that serve a purpose in the larger plan in life?
- How do Christians understand the concept of salvation?

**Sample Learning Experiences (from online unit)**
- Research the beliefs about good and evil in the different religious traditions (1.1.2)
- Examine an ethical issue (e.g. euthanasia) from a particular religious perspective (1.3.2)
- Explore various beliefs about the consequences of a “good” life for believers in various faith traditions (3.2.1)
- Research a world religion to discover its teachings about the ways to live a good life and its ultimate reward (3.2.1)
- Investigate the teachings about compassion, mercy and forgiveness in one of the religions of the world (3.3)
- What are some of the questions people ask about the nature of God and truth?

**The Australian Scene**

*Dimensions with key ideas and questions*

**Personal**
- What is the religious profile of my class?
- How do I relate to people who have different beliefs from me?

**Relational**
- What religious groups make up the Australian scene today?
- How does Australian culture demonstrate respect for religious groups?
- What were the beginnings of religious diversity in Australian history?
**Spiritual**
- What contributions do religions make to the Australian identity?

**Sample Learning Experiences (from online unit)**
- Take a census of the religious affiliations of the students in the class (2.1.1)
- Examine the statistics from 1996 and 2006 census on religious affiliation in Australia to investigate changes in the religious landscape (2.1.1)
- Explore local celebrations that reflect the diversity of religious traditions (e.g. Buddha’s birthday festival; visit of Dalai Lama; World Youth Day) (2.1.3)
- Investigate the origins of world religions in Australia (2.2.3)
- List the places of worship in the local area today (2.2.3)

**Religious Citizenship**

*Dimensions with key ideas and questions*

**Personal**
- How does my faith tradition regard other faith traditions?
- How can I maintain my own religious identity in a multi-faith world?

**Relational**
- How do religious rituals allow people to relate to each other?
- How can and how do religions co-operate on social and ecological issues?
- How do we respect the religious rights and needs of others?

**Spiritual**
- What impact do religions have on political citizenship?
- In what ways is religious freedom a gift for others?
- How does the understanding of other religious traditions deepen my own faith?

**Sample Learning Experiences**
- Research examples of religious groups co-operating on local, national and global issues.
- Explore a particular ritual in a religious tradition and discuss how the ritual encourages people to interrelate.
- Invite guest speakers from various religious traditions to discuss their faith and personal beliefs.

**Heroes and Role Models**

*Dimensions with key ideas and questions*

**Spiritual**
- Who are the heroes in the mythology and sacred stories of the world religions?
- How do various religions view ‘Messianic’ heroes such as Jesus Christ and Buddha?
- What is the function of hero figures in different religious traditions?

**Sample Learning Experiences**
- Research the influence and impact of a religious founder or significant person e.g. Jesus, Buddha, Hildegard von Bingen, Aung San Suu Kyi.
- Reflect on the words and actions of religious heroes, both historical and contemporary.
- Analyse the impact and lasting influence of a significant sacred person.
Gender and Spirituality

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
• Who are some influential men and women in the various religious traditions today?

Relational
• How are men and women viewed differently or the same in a particular religious tradition?
• What are some issues that relate to gender in a particular religious tradition?
• What opportunities do men and women have for leadership in a particular religious tradition?

Spiritual
• What are some male and female images of God that are found in the various religious traditions?
• How do men and women express their spirituality differently in a particular religious tradition?

Sample Learning Experiences
• Explore the area of inclusive language in some prayers or songs from a particular religious tradition.
• Read passages from sacred texts that highlight and contrast male and female characters, roles and relationships.
• Explore how female images of the divine are linked with the concept of fertility and sexuality.
• Discuss the issue of the ordination of women in the Christian churches.

Ethics and Morality

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
• What do I understand to be wrong and right?
• Where does my understanding of ethics and morality come from?

Relational
• What moral frameworks do religions use to guide adherents?
• How are the beliefs of a particular religion reflected in their moral code or ethics?
• What are the consequences for not following a moral or ethical code in a particular religious tradition?

Spiritual
• For what reasons do people base their morality or ethical decisions on religious teachings?
• How have religious beliefs influenced the values and ethics in society today?
• What is the relationship between personal faith and moral action?

Sample Learning Experiences
• Interview people from different religious traditions to find out their response to ethical or moral issues.
• Compare the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with basic moral principles found in religious traditions such as the Ten Commandments, Buddha’s teaching, the Qu’ran, gospel teachings of Jesus.
• Compare the beliefs and principles that underpin moral teaching in religious and/or philosophical systems.
Origins, Purpose and Destiny

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- Who am I?
- How might I describe my personal origins and individual identity?

Relational
- Do people really matter?
- Is my destiny linked to that of others?

Spiritual
- Is there a grand plan? Says who?
- What do Christians believe about God’s plan for human existence?

Sample Learning Experiences
- Explore a number of creation myths from various cultures

Life Choices

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- What role can forgiveness play in my life?
- What are my personal beliefs?

Relational
- What do different Religions teach about relationships?

Spiritual
- How might I achieve a balanced life — body, mind and spirit?

Sample Learning Experiences (from the BCE online unit)
- Explore the Christian concept of a full life (1.1.2)
- Explore understandings of what constitutes a balanced life — body, mind and spirit. (1.2.2)
- Explore understandings of Christian love as based on the concept of God is love. (1.3 Depthing Understanding)
- Examine the concept of believing without seeing to explore the notion of faith. (2.2.1)

Spirituality and Ritual

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- Is everyone conscious of the spiritual dimensions of their lives?
- What are rituals and ceremonies that mark major life events — birth, marriage, completing school, beginning work, and death?

Relational
- How do the arts challenge people’s ideas about God, life and faith?
- What are people’s roles in the rituals of different religious traditions? Who is involved?
- What are the characteristics of rituals?
- What role does ritual play in celebrating special communal events?
**Spiritual**
- What are the elements that make up a ritual (e.g. purpose, structure, place, participants, objects/symbols)?
- How have the arts been used to express the struggle of faith?
- What messages have people presented about personal faith and religious topics through the visual arts, drama, music and film?

**Sample Learning Experiences (from the BCE online unit)**
- Identify a ritual that has some meaning for you. (2.1.1)
- Examine the structure of a religious ritual and the levels of meaning for participants. (2.1.2)
- Research a religious ritual that impacts on the faith life of believers (e.g. birth, death, marriage). 2.1.3
- Explore the place of art (e.g. The Blake Prize) in expressing a Christian understanding of the nature of the divine. (3.1.2)

**Sacred Stories**

**Relational:**
- What do stories show about community traditions and values?

**Spiritual:**
- What are the stories about God and the Gods?
- What are the stories of the founders of different religious groups?
- How are these stories used by the adherents of particular religions for preaching and teaching, for highlighting values and shared traditions, and for framing ritual experiences?

**Sample Learning Experiences (from online unit)**
- Explore the sacredness of certain texts in particular religious traditions. (1.1.3)
- Research the story of a founder of a particular religion and how that story informs and forms individuals and communities (2.1)
SACRED TEXTS STRAND

In Years 11 and 12, the study of Christian sacred texts (Old Testament and New Testament) in the P – 12 Religion Curriculum aligns with the approach taken in the current Religion and Ethics SAS (2004), namely:

“...In the telling and retelling of significant stories people may find meaning in life. This elective [Sacred Stories] provides students with an opportunity to:

- explore genres such as myth, legend and epics
- understand how stories shape and express meaning
- understand and appreciate the power of story in capturing, recalling and preserving the life experiences, past and present of ... religious groups throughout the world
- discover how believers and adherents of different religious groups use stories of founders and experiences of followers to: reveal their sense of the spiritual dimension in life; connect them to history and traditions; express and reinforce their common beliefs; use them as sacred texts in personal reflection and contemplation, and in community rituals, liturgies and similar expressions (p.59).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALIGNMENT:
The Elective topic Sacred Stories provides a straightforward and authentic opportunity to address the requirements of both the P-12 Religion Curriculum and the Religion and Ethics SAS.


Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- Key figures from Christian sacred texts (e.g. Jesus, disciples) who inhabit the story of my life
- Use of Christian sacred texts in personal reflection and contemplation
- Use stories of founders and experiences of followers to inform and form personal and family values and beliefs
- Use of Christian sacred texts to shape and express meaning (e.g. about redemption, judgement, hope, resurrection, reign of God)

Relational
- Historical, cultural, social and political dimensions of communities in Christian sacred texts
- What do stories in Christian sacred texts show about community traditions and values?
- How are group identities shaped by Christian sacred texts? (e.g. institution of Eucharist, early Christian communities - synoptic gospels)
- What messages do stories in Christian sacred texts give that regulate or govern the ways by which people behave towards each other? (e.g. judgement, liberation, hope, resurrection, redemption, reconciliation)

Spiritual
- What are the stories about God in Christian sacred texts?
- Stories of founders and followers in Christian sacred texts (Jesus, disciples, early Church)
- How are Christian sacred texts used by the adherents of Christianity for preaching and teaching, for highlighting values and shared traditions, and for framing ritual experiences?
Sample Learning Experiences

- Share significant stories from Christian sacred texts and apply modern methods of interpretation to gain meaning from these texts
- Identify and list the many text types found in Christian sacred texts
- Create an illustrated storybook for young people drawing on one of the great themes of the Christian scriptures (judgment, resurrection, hope, liberation, redemption, reconciliation

Possible opportunities for alignment with other Religion and Ethics Elective topics:

If necessary, it would be possible to study Christian sacred texts in a School-based elective.
CHURCH STRAND

In Years 11 and 12, the study of Church in the P – 12 Religion Curriculum aligns with the approach taken in the current Religion and Ethics SAS (2004), namely:

“A program of study derived from this study area specification aims to help students to:

- Develop a critical awareness of ethical issues related to the values, belief systems or religious traditions of the student and the community
- foster an appreciation of and respect for diverse value systems, beliefs and cultures, and the contribution of religion, religious groups, welfare and service groups to society
- appreciate the influence that ethical and religious people in society have on the development of a sense of purpose and personal integrity
- know and understand the influence that values, belief systems, religious traditions and ethical frameworks have on their own and other people’s behaviour” (Religion and Ethics SAS, 2004, P.2)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALIGNMENT:
The following Elective topics provide an opportunity to address the requirements of both the P-12 Religion Curriculum and the Religion and Ethics SAS.


Religions of the World
Focus:
- find out the beliefs and practices of Christians around the world
- understand Christian teachings, philosophies and concepts and how these contribute to the search for meaning and personal wellbeing

Dimensions with key ideas and questions
Relational
- How did the Christian scriptures come into being and what is their function?
- The spread of Christianity through colonisation
- Missionary movements and charitable organisations
- Wars fought in the name of Christianity
- Historical roots of Christian denominations
- How has Christianity contributed to the great movements for a better world?

Spiritual
- The function of prayer, ritual, worship and the sacraments in the Christian tradition
- Eternal life and the afterlife in Christianity

Sample Learning Experiences
- Examine the impact of Christianity on major legal, social and political developments in Australian history to discover the implicit Christian basis of many contemporary social norms.
**Good and Evil**

*Focus:* 
- examine how religions of the world have dealt with good and evil intrinsic to humanity
- examine how individuals, society and religions respond to situations that affect human existence; the situations may be related to good, evil, suffering, pain or death.
- investigate the different approaches taken by religions, cultures and societies to the experience of suffering on all levels — personal, communal and universal.

*Dimensions with key ideas and questions*

**Personal**
- Concepts of personal evil and goodness in religions over time

**Relational**
- Responses to suffering and evil in religions of the world
- Examples of social injustice in local and global communities over time

**Spiritual**
- Ways to holiness in response to good and evil
- Philosophical positions (e.g. Marxism, Nazism) on good and evil and how these enable people to resolve the problem of evil.
- Consequences of good and evil for afterlife
- Concepts of guilt, personal responsibility, moral temptation, damnation, salvation

**Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)**
- Topic 1.1: Making Meaning
- Topic 1.2: Human Freedom and Responsibility
- Topic 2.2: Holocaust case studies

**The Australian Scene**

*Focus:*
Religious communities exist and grow in ever changing and cultural contexts. Many religious traditions and belief systems have taken on a particularly Australian flavour. This elective provides students with the opportunities to:
- Examine the function and structure of public ceremonies, for individuals and for Australian society
- Study the function of religious rituals (rites of passage, initiation ceremonies, commemoration events) in Australian culture
- Appreciate the development of religious diversity in Australia
- explore the development of Australian culture from a spiritual or religious point of view
- understand the contributions that religious communities make and have made to Australian society
- study the history of particular faith traditions in Australia
- examine the growth of new religious movements in Australian society.

*Dimensions with key ideas and questions*

**Personal**
- What does being an Australian mean to me? How is religious experience (e.g. ritual) linked to this in any way?
- My family’s spiritual story

**Relational**
- Religious groups in Australian history
The influence of religion in Australia
- How does Religion fit into Australian culture?
- What contributions do religions make to the Australian identity?
- The relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous spiritualties
- How has Australian culture demonstrated respect for religious groups?
- How have religions enhanced their own identity, respected difference and coexisted with other religious groups?

**Spiritual**
- Places of religious significance for Australians
- How has Religion critiqued certain aspects of a culture, e.g. the conscription debate in Australia; the Church and politics; the education debate in Australia, the treatment of Indigenous peoples; environmental stewardship

**Sample Learning Experiences** *(from online Religion and Ethics Course)*
- Topic 2.2: How did it all begin?
- Topic 2.3: How does Australian culture interact with Religion?
- Topic 3.1: How does religion impact on education, health, welfare?
- Topic 3.2: Does religion influence cultural values and debate?
- Topic 3.3: Australia Tomorrow?

**Social Justice**

**Focus**
- Investigate religious responses to social justice concerns

**Dimensions with key ideas and questions**

**Relational**
- Outreach and welfare groups – e.g. St Vincent de Paul
- Who is responsible for social justice?

**Spiritual:**
- Links between beliefs and action
- Links between religious teaching and social justice issues (or lack of them) e.g. hospitals, education, welfare
- How do religions work to achieve changes in social systems?
- Religious teachings about justice

**Sample Learning Experiences** *(from online Religion and Ethics Course)*
- Topic 1.1: Who cares about justice?
- Topic 1.2: Dimensions of justice
- Topic 1.3: Justice spirituality
- Topic 2.1: Towards a culture of justice
- Topic 2.2: Agents of change
- Topic 3.2: Even though we may look small
Peace Studies

Dimensions with key ideas and questions
Relational
- Factors contributing to war, violence and injustice
- Conflicts/violent behaviour and peaceful coexistence — history of ethnic and racial relations

Spiritual:
- Religious and cultural teachings about peace and war; similarity and differences
- Are wars ever just?
- Religious wars
- Links between beliefs and action
- The role of social justice in promoting peace

School-based elective

Topics that may be suitable for a school-based elective include:

- selected denominations of faith (and their history)
- religious communities (and their histories)
- ethics and the environment (including influences of the Church over time)

Ethics and Morality

Focus:
Students have the opportunity to:
- Explore factors that contribute to a person’s moral stance (e.g. religious beliefs)
- Examine the response of religious tradition(s) and belief systems to moral issues

Dimensions with key ideas and questions
Relational
- Religions provide systematic approaches to address ethical issues
- Factors contributing to war, violence and injustice
- Conflicts/violent behaviour and peaceful coexistence — history of ethnic and racial relations

Spiritual:
- Many people base their morality on God / religious teaching
- Contributions of religious beliefs to moral reasoning
- Religious and cultural teachings about peace and war; similarity and differences
- Are wars ever just?
- Religious wars
Gender and Spirituality

**Focus:**
The roles men and women have taken or been given in religious contexts throughout history have helped shape gender roles and relationships in religious groups and in broader society. This elective provides students with an opportunity to understand and explore:

- the roles men and women have taken in religion or have been ascribed by society
- roles of men and women in religious contexts
- influential female and male religious figures, past and present

**Dimensions with key ideas and questions**

**Relational**

- How have men and women related to each other throughout history?
- Relationships between the sexes in ancient religions, primal religious groups and in the major religions of the world
- Comparison of treatment of women and men in different religious and cultural groups

**Sample Learning Experiences**

- Tell stories of influential female and male religious figures, past and present
- Research and compile a short biography on a man or woman of faith who made an extraordinary contribution in their day and age. Present in oral or written form.
- Create a book by collating images and descriptions of religious men and women from many faiths and cultures — images of gods and goddesses, male and female inspirational figures/saints, women and men from scriptures and texts, and write an introduction to the book that summarises what you have discovered.
- In a group, prepare an art exhibition entitled Women and Men of Faith by compiling a catalogue of works, preparing a press release, posters and a media campaign to advertise the exhibition.

Heroes and Role Models

**Focus:**
Heroes constitute an important element of the story of all communities. ... This elective gives students the opportunity to:

- investigate the lives of heroes in a range of contexts, e.g. in their personal life and in the context of a religious tradition
- examine the need for heroes in their lives and in the community
- consider the links between topics such as ‘heroes and religious experience’, ‘meaning and purpose’

**Dimensions with key ideas and questions**

**Personal:**

- Who am I?
- What kind of person do I want to become?
- Who are my heroes?
- Which heroes will I choose or reject?
- Factors that influence my choice of hero

**Relational:**

- Are heroes people I follow? Why?
- The relationship between a hero and the community — how does a hero influence a community?
- What are the criteria by which a community judges a hero?
- How does a hero influence/define a community?
How does a hero challenge the life of a community?
Do heroes have responsibilities to their communities?
What happens to a community when the hero fails?
What are the repercussions when heroes fall?
Ways in which communities honour their heroes
What long-term effects do heroes have?
Need for the anti-hero

**Spiritual**
- The functions of heroes in religious traditions
- Heroes in mythology and religion
- The values, beliefs and spirituality of heroes

**Sample Learning Experiences** (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
- Topic 3.1: Saints and martyrs
  - Research the influence and impact of a religious founder and/or significant person e.g. Jesus, Buddha, Hildegard von Bingen, Ayatollah Khomeini, Aung San Suu Kyi.
  - Reflect on the words and actions of heroes: founders, leaders, saints, martyrs and contemporary heroes.
- Topic 3.2: Religious heroes and role models

**Origins, Purpose and Destiny**

**Focus:**
- religious responses to the human quest for understanding the origin and destiny of humankind over time

**Dimensions with key ideas and questions**

**Personal**
- Who am I?
- Why am I here? For what am I responsible?
- Personal origins and individual identity
- How did I come to be here?
- Where am I going? In my earthly life – beyond my earthly life?

**Relational**
- Human freedom
- For what and to whom are people responsible?

**Spiritual**
- What purpose does life really hold? Does life have meaning?
- Is there a grand plan? Says who?
- Religious interpretations concerning pain and suffering
- Notions of afterlife

**Sample Learning Experiences** (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
- Identify and explore continuity and change in beliefs about immortality, reincarnation, resurrection and life after death
- Topic 3.1: Freedom and responsibility
- Topic 3.3: Life after death
- Topic 2.1: Being the best you can be
- Topic 2.2: The getting of wisdom
- Topic 2.3: Leaving a legacy
Religious Citizenship

Focus:
• understand the concept of religious citizenship

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
• What are my rights and responsibilities as a religious citizen?
• How do I develop my capacities as a religious citizen in the classroom, school, in my part-time work and in the wider world?

Relational
• How do religious rituals, weddings ... allow people to relate to each other?
• Religions, while maintaining their own identity, can cooperate on social and ecological issues.

Spiritual
• The impact of religious values on political citizenship

Sample Learning Experiences (from the online Religion and Ethics Course)

Spirituality and Ritual

Focus:
• understand and appreciate the religious heritage and the traditions of others
• grow in their knowledge and understanding of different expressions of spirituality, as well as the place of signs and symbols, ritual, liturgy and prayer in the life of the individual and the community
• understand that spirituality evolves from people’s individual life journeys

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
• What does ritual mean to me?
• What are rituals and ceremonies that mark major life events – marriage, death?

Relational
• How are symbols and rituals used to create bonds between people?
• What are people’s roles in the rituals of different religious traditions? Who is involved?
• What are the characteristics of rituals?
• The role of rituals in celebrating special communal events
• Are spirituality and materialism compatible?

Spiritual
• Rituals contain the elements of purpose, structure, place, participants, objects/symbols
• How important are signs and symbols?
• Symbols are special signs that point to deeper spiritual truths
• How do different belief systems view life events?

Sample Learning Experiences (from the online Religion and Ethics Course)
• Topic 1.3: What is Christian spirituality?
• Topic 2.1: Ritual – Our common language
• Topic 2.2: Ritual Prayer and Meditation
Sacred Stories

Focus:
• understand and appreciate the power of story in capturing, recalling and preserving the life experiences, past and present, of cultural and religious groups throughout the world
• discover how believers and adherents of different religious groups use stories of founders and experiences of followers to connect them to history and traditions

Personal:
• Key figures from the past and present who inhabit the story of my life
• How do the actions and reflections in our own, our families’ and friends’ stories express the values that we consider most important?

Relational:
• Stories about communities — secular and religious.
• What do stories show about community traditions and values?
• How are group identities shaped by common stories?

Spiritual:
• Stories of founders and followers of different religious groups
• How are these stories used by the adherents of particular religions for preaching and teaching, for highlighting values and shared traditions, and for framing ritual experiences?

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
• Lesson 2.3.1 The early Christian story

Life Choices

Focus:
This elective gives students the opportunity to:
• Examine the relationship between belief and community consciousness and action
• Study how faith has motivated people to make a difference in the lives of others
• Show an awareness of the ways in which people are able to contribute to this world
• Explore lifestyle choices and options

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal:
• What does commitment mean to me?
• The dreams and goals for my life
• Lifestyles, single life, marriage, sexuality, religious life
• What do I have to offer the world?
• Developing personal awareness and reflection
• Prayer, meditation, stillness as a lifestyle choice

Relational:
• Love is ultimately a decision that people make
• When is a marriage not a marriage?

Spiritual
• Implications of lifestyle choice for the wider community
• Achieving a balanced life – body, mind and spirit
• How have life choices changed over the years?
Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)

- Topic 1.1: My relational self
- Topic 1.2: My spiritual self
- Topic 2.1: Handling Things
- Topic 2.2: Keeping in Balance
- Topic 3.1: Joie de vivre!
- Topic 3.2: Embracing the Journey
- Topic 3.3: Life to the Full
CHRISTIAN LIFE STRAND

In Years 11 and 12, the study of Christian Life in the P – 12 Religion Curriculum aligns with the approach taken in the current Religion and Ethics SAS (2004), namely:

“A program of study derived from this study area specification aims to help students to:
• recognise and reflect on the personal, relational and spiritual dimensions of human existence
• appreciate the influence that ethical and religious people in society have on the development of a sense of purpose and personal integrity
• develop ethical attitudes and behaviours required for effective participation in the community
• think critically, creatively and constructively about their future roles and responsibilities locally and globally
(Religion and Ethics SAS, 2004, p.2)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALIGNMENT:
The following Elective topics provide an opportunity to address the requirements of both the Christian Life Strand of the P-12 Religion Curriculum and the Religion and Ethics SAS.


Religions of the World

Focus:
• understand Christian teachings, philosophies and concepts and how these contribute to the search for meaning and personal wellbeing
• explore Christian ethical perspectives and their value in today’s world
• find out the beliefs and practices of Christians around the world

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
• the function of traditional Christian spiritualities in the personal search for meaning

Relational
• Christian ethics are based on the teachings of Jesus
• Connection between personal faith and relationships with others
• Christian commitment and the struggle for social justice, world peace, environmental protection, political freedom and ethical business practice

Spiritual
• The function of prayer, ritual, worship and the sacraments in the Christian tradition
• Developing a devotional life
• The role of the arts in developing a spirituality

Sample Learning Experiences
• Examine the impact of Christianity on major legal, social and political developments in Australian history to discover the implicit Christian basis of many contemporary social norms.
• Visit an art exhibition drama, film or music performance to discern key aspects of contemporary Christian spirituality
Good and Evil

Focus:
- Reflect on the reality of good and evil experienced by human beings
- Explore the essential ingredients of truth, beauty, good and evil and their expression in daily life
- Examine how religions of the world have dealt with good and evil intrinsic to humanity
- Reflect on personal concepts of good and evil and the implications for daily decision making

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- Definitions of good and evil
- Concepts of personal evil and goodness in religions

Relational
- Images of good and evil in society
- Definitions of good and evil from a range of perspectives
- Responses to suffering and evil in religions of the world
- Examples of social injustice in local and global communities
- Images of good and evil people in society

Spiritual
- Religious beliefs about and images of good and evil
- Concepts of personal evil and goodness in religions
- Natural and moral evil
- Can evil ever be justified?
- Religious images of good and evil
- Concepts of guilt, personal responsibility, moral temptation, damnation, salvation

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
- Topic 1.1: Making Meaning
- Topic 1.2: Human Freedom and Responsibility (including Social Conscience)
- Topic 3.2: Action and inaction (including Social Networking and The power of the press)
- Topic 3.3: In pursuit of full humanity

The Australian Scene

Focus:
- Explore contemporary Australian spiritualities
- Explore Australian culture from a spiritual or religious point of view

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- My family’s spiritual story

Relational
- The influence of religion in Australia
- What religious values underpin the values within Australian society today? (e.g. industrial relations, welfare for the poor)

Spiritual
- Is there any underlying spirituality to traditional Australian concepts such as mateship, the ‘fair go’ etc?
- How has Religion critiqued certain aspects of a culture e.g. bioethical dilemmas, euthanasia, the treatment of Indigenous peoples; environmental stewardship?
Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)

- Topic 1.2: What is important to Australians?
- Topic 2.3: How does Australian culture interact with Religion?
- Topic 3.1: How does religion impact on education, health, welfare?
- Topic 3.2: Does religion influence cultural values and debate? (including Religion and the Arts)
- Topic 3.3: Australia Tomorrow?

Social Justice

Focus

- Investigate what constitutes just practice in a community
- Investigate religious responses to social justice concerns
- Explore active means of participation in dealing with social justice concerns

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal

- How can I contribute to a just world?

Relational

- Define a just society
- Are all people’s rights equal?
- Social rights – individual v. group
- Outreach and welfare groups – e.g. St Vincent de Paul
- Who is responsible for social justice?

Spiritual:

- What is justice?
- Links between beliefs and action
- Links between religious teaching and social justice issues (or lack of them) e.g. hospitals, education, welfare
- Implications of religious ideas
- How do religions work to achieve changes in social systems?
- Religious teachings about justice

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)

- Topic 1.1: Who cares about justice?
- Topic 1.2: Dimensions of justice
- Topic 1.3: Justice spirituality
- Topic 2.1: Towards a culture of justice
- Topic 2.2: Agents of change
- Topic 2.3: Get the message out
- Topic 3.1: Exploring the issues
- Topic 3.2: Even though we may look small
- Topic 3.3: Speak out and use my voice
Peace Studies

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Spiritual:
- Religious perspectives of and motivation for peace
- Religious and cultural teachings about peace and war; similarity and differences
- Links between beliefs and action
- The role of social justice in promoting peace

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
- Topic 1.1: Threats to peace
- Topic 1.3: Challenging the thinking
- Topic 2.1: Religions and peace
- Topic 3.2: Taking responsibility

Ethics and Morality

Focus:
Students have the opportunity to:
- Explore factors that contribute to a person’s moral stance (e.g. religious beliefs)
- Examine the response of religious tradition(s) and belief systems to moral issues

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
- What do I understand to be right and wrong? Moral? Immoral? Amoral?
- Do I need some guidelines and limits regarding ethical and moral matters?

Relational
- Links between human rights and moral action; the law and moral action; social justice and moral action; Christian teaching and moral action
- Religions provide systematic approaches to address ethical issues

Spiritual:
- Is there an absolute moral code?
- Many people base their morality on God / religious teaching
- Contributions of religious beliefs to moral reasoning
- Sources of guidance in moral decision making

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
TBA
Religious Citizenship

Focus:
• understand the concept of religious citizenship

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal
• What are my rights and responsibilities as a religious citizen?
• How do I develop my capacities as a religious citizen in the classroom, school, in my part-time work and in the wider world?

Relational
• Religions, while maintaining their own identity, can cooperate on social and ecological issues.
• How can I exercise my global citizenship?

Spiritual
• The impact of religious values on political citizenship

Sample Learning Experiences (from the online Religion and Ethics Course)
TBA

Spirituality and Ritual

Focus:
• Develop their spiritual awareness
• grow in their knowledge and understanding of different expressions of spirituality, as well as the place of signs and symbols, ritual, liturgy and prayer in the life of the individual and the community
• understand that spirituality evolves from people’s individual life journeys

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Relational
• Are spirituality and materialism compatible?
• Do mainstream religious expressions of spirituality meet the needs of people in the modern age?

Spiritual
• How important are signs and symbols?
• Symbols are special signs that point to deeper spiritual truths

Sample Learning Experiences (from the online Religion and Ethics Course)
• Topic 1.3: What is Christian spirituality?
• Topic 2.1: Ritual – Our common language
• Topic 2.2: Ritual Prayer and Meditation
• Topic 3.1: Spirituality and the Arts
• Topic 3.2: The Australian Scene
• Topic 3.3: Staying Connected
Sacred Stories

Focus:
- discover how believers and adherents of different religious groups use stories of founders and experiences of followers to reveal their sense of the spiritual dimension in life; express and reinforce their common beliefs; use them as sacred texts in personal reflection and contemplation and similar expressions

Personal:
- How do the actions and reflections in our own, our families’ and friends’ stories express the values that we consider most important?

Relational:
- Stories about communities — secular and religious.
- What do stories show about community traditions and values?
- Moral messages in stories
- What messages do stories give that regulate or govern the ways by which people behave towards each other?

Spiritual:
- What stories link us to the cosmos and give a sense of the spiritual?
- Stories of founders and followers of different religious groups
- How are these stories used by the adherents of particular religions for preaching and teaching, for highlighting values and shared traditions, and for framing prayer experiences?

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
- Topic 2.3 The Jesus Story

Life Choices

Focus:
This elective gives students the opportunity to:
- Examine the relationship between belief and community consciousness and action
- Study how faith has motivated people to make a difference in the lives of others
- Show an awareness of the ways in which people are able to contribute to this world

Dimensions with key ideas and questions

Personal:
- Developing personal awareness and reflection
- Prayer, meditation, stillness as a lifestyle choice
- Developing a journal – what is it and how is it different from a diary?

Spiritual
- Achieving a balanced life – body, mind and spirit
- How do people express their spirituality in their life and their choices e.g. church membership, charities, music, film, enjoying creation through bushwalking

Sample Learning Experiences (from online Religion and Ethics Course)
- Topic 1.2: My spiritual self
- Topic 2.2: Keeping in Balance
- Topic 3.2: Embracing the Journey
- Topic 3.3: Life to the Full