

# Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area

## **Ethics and Religious Studies** Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)

Jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council and  
The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority

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# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Preamble</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Rationale	2
1.3 Curriculum Aims	2
1.4 Curriculum Objectives	3
1.5 Broad Learning Outcomes	3
1.6 Interface with Junior Secondary Education and Post-secondary Pathways	4
<b>Chapter 2 Curriculum Framework</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Design Principles	5
2.2 Curriculum Structure and Organisation	5
2.2.1 Compulsory Part: Ethics	7
2.2.2 Elective Part I: Religious Traditions	14
2.2.3 Elective Part II: Faiths in Action	40
2.2.4 Time allocation	42
<b>Chapter 3 Curriculum Planning</b>	<b>44</b>
3.1 Guiding Principles	44
3.2 Progression	45
3.3 Curriculum Planning Strategies	48
3.3.1 Interfacing junior secondary and senior secondary curriculum	48
3.3.2 Catering for learner diversity	48
3.3.3 Making use of ad hoc issues and life events	49
3.3.4 Linkages to other learning experiences and informal curricula	49
3.3.5 Cross-curricular planning	50
3.3.6 Integrating learning with assessment	50
3.4 Managing the Curriculum	51
3.4.1 Areas of work	51
3.4.2 Roles of different stakeholders	52

<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Learning and Teaching</b>	<b>54</b>
4.1	Knowledge and Learning	54
4.1.1	Constructing knowledge through concept development	54
4.1.2	Roles of learners and teachers	56
4.2	Guiding Principles	56
4.3	Approaches and Strategies	57
4.3.1	From enquiry to reflection	57
4.3.2	Choosing appropriate learning and teaching strategies	61
4.3.3	Experiential learning	66
4.3.4	Reading to learn	68
4.4	Learning Community	69
4.5	Catering for Learning Differences	69
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>71</b>
5.1	The Roles of Assessment	71
5.2	Formative and Summative Assessment	72
5.3	Assessment Objectives	73
5.4	Internal Assessment	75
5.4.1	Guiding principles	75
5.4.2	Internal assessment practices	77
5.5	Public Assessment	80
5.5.1	Guiding principles	80
5.5.2	Assessment design	81
5.5.3	Public examinations	81
5.5.4	Standards and reporting of results	82
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>Learning and Teaching Resources</b>	<b>84</b>
6.1	Function of Learning and Teaching Resources	84
6.2	Guiding Principles	85
6.3	Commonly Used Resources	85
6.3.1	Textbooks	85
6.3.2	Reference materials	87
6.3.3	Curriculum Support Materials by CDI, EDB	87
6.3.4	Technology and web-based resources	88
6.3.5	Mass media	88
6.3.6	Community resources	89
6.4	Flexible Use of Learning and Teaching Resources	90
6.4.1	Fitness for purpose	90
6.4.2	Catering for learner diversity	90
6.5	Resource Management	90

**Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies and its Working Group**

**Membership of the Curriculum Development Council Committee on Personal, Social and Humanities Education**

## Preamble

The Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB, now renamed Education Bureau, (EDB)) stated in its report<sup>1</sup> in 2005 that the implementation of a three-year senior secondary academic structure would commence at Secondary 4 in September 2009. The senior secondary academic structure is supported by a flexible, coherent and diversified senior secondary curriculum aimed at catering for students' varied interests, needs and abilities. This Curriculum and Assessment (C&A) Guide is one of the series of documents prepared for the senior secondary curriculum. It is based on the goals of senior secondary education and on other official documents related to the curriculum and assessment reform since 2000, including the *Basic Education Curriculum Guide* (2002) and the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (2009). To gain a full understanding of the connection between education at the senior secondary level and other key stages, and how effective learning, teaching and assessment can be achieved, it is strongly recommended that reference should be made to all related documents.

This C&A Guide is designed to provide the rationale and aims of the subject curriculum, followed by chapters on the curriculum framework, curriculum planning, pedagogy, assessment and use of learning and teaching resources. One key concept underlying the senior secondary curriculum is that curriculum, pedagogy and assessment should be well aligned. While learning and teaching strategies form an integral part of the curriculum and are conducive to promoting learning to learn and whole-person development, assessment should also be recognised not only as a means to gauge performance but also to improve learning. To understand the interplay between these three key components, all chapters in the C&A Guide should be read in a holistic manner.

The C&A Guide was jointly prepared by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) in 2007. The first updating was made in January 2014 to align with the short-term recommendations made on the senior secondary curriculum and assessment resulting from the New Academic Structure (NAS) review so that students and teachers could benefit at the earliest possible instance. This updating is made to align with the medium-term recommendations of the NAS review made on curriculum and assessment. The CDC is an advisory body that gives recommendations to the HKSAR Government on all matters relating to curriculum development for the school system from kindergarten to senior secondary level. Its membership includes heads of schools, practising teachers, parents, employers, academics from tertiary institutions, professionals from related fields/bodies, representatives from the HKEAA and the Vocational Training Council (VTC), as well as officers from the EDB. The HKEAA is an independent statutory body responsible for the conduct of public assessment, including the assessment for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE). Its governing council includes members

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<sup>1</sup> The report is *The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong*.

drawn from the school sector, tertiary institutions and government bodies, as well as professionals and members of the business community.

The C&A Guide is recommended by the EDB for use in secondary schools. The subject curriculum forms the basis of the assessment designed and administered by the HKEAA. In this connection, the HKEAA will issue a handbook to provide information on the rules and regulations of the HKDSE Examination as well as the structure and format of public assessment for each subject.

The CDC and HKEAA will keep the subject curriculum under constant review and evaluation in the light of classroom experiences, students' performance in the public assessment, and the changing needs of students and society. All comments and suggestions on this C&A Guide may be sent to:

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## Acronyms

ApL	Applied Learning
ASL	Advanced Supplementary Level
C&A	Curriculum and Assessment
CDC	Curriculum Development Council
CE	Certificate of Education
EMB	Education and Manpower Bureau
ERS	Ethics and Religious Studies
HKALE	Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination
HKCEE	Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination
HKDSE	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education
HKEAA	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
IT	Information Technology
KLA	Key Learning Area
KS1/2/3/4	Key Stage 1/2/3/4
OLE	Other Learning Experiences
PSHE	Personal, Social and Humanities Education
S1/2/3/4/5/6/7	Secondary 1/2/3/4/5/6/7
SBA	School-based Assessment
SSCG	Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide
VTC	Vocational Training Council

# Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides the background, rationale and aims of Ethics and Religious Studies (ERS) as an elective subject in the three-year senior secondary curriculum, and highlights how it articulates with the junior secondary curriculum, post-secondary education, and future career pathways.

## 1.1 Background

The ERS curriculum is developed on the basis of the recommendations made in the *New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education — Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong* (EMB, 2005) and the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2009). These two documents provide the overall direction for the development of senior secondary education in Hong Kong. They stipulated a combination of core and elective subjects, Applied Learning courses and other learning experiences to suit individual interests and aptitudes.

ERS is one of the electives in the senior secondary curriculum. It is built on the *Religious Studies (Christianity) Curriculum for Secondary 4 – 5* (implemented in 1998), *Buddhist Studies* (HKCE Examination Syllabus) and the *Advanced Supplementary Level Ethics and Religious Studies Curriculum* (implemented in 2001). It also follows the general direction set out in the *Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 3)* (CDC, 2002) and extends the prior knowledge, skills and values and attitudes students developed through the Personal, Social and Humanities Education (PSHE) curriculum in basic education.

This curriculum guide sets out the overall aims of the subject, and the learning objectives and outcomes for senior secondary level. It includes detailed explanatory notes, key points and biblical references (for module 2 Christianity in Elective Part I) in the curriculum content and a description of the assessment framework. Normative Ethics and Personal and Social Issues are compulsory components of the curriculum. The study of ethics lays the foundation of values formation and judgement, while the discussion on current and controversial issues prepares students to face related challenges and struggles in the future, and contributes to their social, moral and spiritual development. Choices are provided in the elective parts on “Religious Traditions” and “Faiths in Action”. Experiential learning activities are organised so that students have practical experience of how the teachings of religious traditions are manifested in daily life.

As an elective PSHE subject in the three-year senior secondary curriculum, ERS encourages students to explore questions of meaning, value and purpose in life. It seeks to help students develop insights, a capacity for moral and spiritual life and personal autonomy. These qualities make life meaningful individually and in the social, cultural and political contexts of pluralistic Hong Kong.



## 1.2 Rationale

The ERS curriculum attempts to make a major contribution to the social, moral and spiritual development of students. Young people are frequently challenged by many religious and moral issues such as the origin and purpose of life, identity, sex and marriage, suffering, and life after death. This curriculum, comprising “Religious Traditions”, “Ethics” and “Faiths in Action”, helps students respond to these issues through a process of enquiry. Students are expected to reflect critically upon their own experience, develop confidence in their religious understanding, and develop an ability to articulate their own beliefs and humanistic qualities.

This curriculum enables students to examine ways in which religious and moral questions have been formulated and reflected upon throughout history and across the globe. Students are encouraged to articulate their own beliefs and engage in dialogue with others. Students study and apply what they have learnt from religious traditions to ethical issues confronting them in their daily lives, and reflect upon their faiths in action when they are engaged in learning activities in social services and religious practices.

The curriculum has a particularly important contribution in helping students appreciate diversity in pluralistic Hong Kong. The richness in the religious traditions of our society provides many opportunities for the students to compare different religions and study their significance.

## 1.3 Curriculum Aims

The aims of the ERS curriculum are to enable students to:

- (a) acquire knowledge of the religion they study and of other major religions in Hong Kong;
- (b) make rational and informed judgements about religious and moral issues;
- (c) enhance their spiritual, moral, and social development; and
- (d) develop a positive attitude towards people and respect for their beliefs.

## 1.4 Curriculum Objectives

Students are expected to develop **knowledge** and **understanding** of:

- (a) the significance of morality to individuals and society;
- (b) the history of major ethical systems and why their tenets have survived the ages;
- (c) the origin, precepts, forms and practices of the religion they study;
- (d) the founders of the religion they study and why their influence continues to the present days;  
and
- (e) contemporary views about religious and ethical issues.

Students are expected to develop **skills** to enable them to:

- (a) reflect upon their own beliefs, values and experiences;
- (b) discuss ethical and religious issues with people who hold beliefs and values different from theirs;
- (c) understand with empathy why people believe and behave as they do;
- (d) debate issues of religious significance on the basis of evidence and rational argument; and
- (e) apply the results of their religious exploration for the betterment of themselves and of their community.

Students are expected to develop the following **values** and **attitudes**:

- (a) respect for others;
- (b) willingness to acknowledge the needs, feelings and aspirations of others and learn from their insights;
- (c) tolerance of ambiguities and paradoxes;
- (d) appreciation of diversity in religions and cultures;
- (e) respect for life; and
- (f) eagerness for meaning and truth.

## 1.5 Broad Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be capable of demonstrating the following:

- (a) an understanding of some basic theories in ethics;
- (b) an ability to apply ethical theories to the analysis of personal and social issues and to maintain open-mindedness, consistency and tolerance when tackling ethical issues;
- (c) an ability to identify situations which require the prioritising of values and virtues;
- (d) an understanding of the complexities involved in making moral decisions;

- (e) an ability to apply critical thinking skills to the making of reasoned and responsible moral decisions through discussion of various ethical issues, such as cloning, prostitution and euthanasia;
- (f) an understanding of the origin, precepts, forms and practices of the religion they study;
- (g) an ability to address problems in their daily lives and tackle contemporary social problems by applying the teachings of the religion they study;
- (h) an ability to take care of others by modelling the life of the religious founders they study;
- (i) an ability to appreciate the religious understanding of humans and the world, and to enhance their own values;
- (j) an ability to apply prior knowledge in ethics studies or religious studies to life experiences and other service experiences; and
- (k) an ability to appreciate the diversity in different religions and cultures, and develop a positive attitude towards people having different religions and respect for their beliefs.

## 1.6 Interface with Junior Secondary Education and Post-secondary Pathways

The study of ERS is built on the knowledge, skills and values and attitudes students have learnt in basic education. These include the concepts and knowledge embedded in the six strands of the PSHE curriculum, in particular the strand “Personal and Social Development”. Because of the learning acquired in Key Stage 3, particularly through Religious Education, Biblical Knowledge, Buddhist Studies, Integrated Humanities and History, students are already equipped with a basic understanding of various religious traditions. ERS at Key Stage 4 emphasises the religious concepts, beliefs and values that can be brought to bear on daily living within specific contexts. Teachers are encouraged to refer to previous learning experiences where appropriate.

The ERS curriculum provides a good foundation for further study in disciplines such as Cultural Studies, History, Theology, Philosophy, Public Administration, Human Resources Management, Social Work and Criminal Justice. It is also an excellent start for the preparation of future social workers, counsellors, teachers, clergy and journalists.

## Chapter 2 Curriculum Framework

The curriculum framework for Ethics and Religious Studies (ERS) embodies the key knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that students are to develop at senior secondary level. It forms the basis on which schools and teachers plan their school-based curriculum and design appropriate learning, teaching and assessment activities.

### 2.1 Design Principles

The following are the design principles of this curriculum:

- (a) build on the basis of the prior knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, and learning experiences students will have gained through their study of the PSHE curriculum in basic education;
- (b) achieve a balance between breadth and depth in the study of ERS to facilitate students' preparation for further studies, entry into the workforce and whole-person development;
- (c) expose students to perspectives and concepts essential to the understanding of the religious and ethical issues in shared human experience, while at the same time emphasising students' ability to transfer and apply these perspectives and concepts to the understanding of new issues;
- (d) provide a balance between essential learning and a flexible and diversified curriculum, catering for students' different interests, needs and abilities through the provision of different modules in the elective parts and an experiential learning programme designed and organised by students;
- (e) allow flexible organisation and progression to cater for the different characteristics and backgrounds of schools and needs of students. Suggestions on possible arrangements in this aspect will be provided in Chapter 3;
- (f) aim to develop students' self-directed and life-long learning skills through promoting student-centred enquiry. Students are expected to respect the pluralism of cultures, values and views, and be critical, reflective and independent thinkers; and
- (g) ensure that assessment is closely aligned with learning.

### 2.2 Curriculum Structure and Organisation

Two major approaches to religious education, namely a systems approach (learning about religions) and a life themes approach (learning from religion), are given balanced emphasis in this curriculum. The first involves developing knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, practices and lifestyles, while the second promotes the skills of asking questions relating to self-identity, the meaning and purpose of life, values and commitments, and of responding to them. Students are thus able to understand and reflect on ethical and religious issues and become aware of their own beliefs and values. They will be able to evaluate

the influence of religion on their lives, and begin their own spiritual search.

**Compulsory Part: Ethics**

This is an introductory study on ethics. The emphasis is on value formation and judgement based on rational thinking.

- Module 1 Normative Ethics
- Module 2 Personal and Social Issues

**Elective Part I: Religious Traditions (Choose ONE only)**

- Module 1 Buddhism
- Module 2 Christianity
- Module 3 Confucianism\*
- Module 4 Islam\*
- Module 5 Taoism\*

\* To be ready for implementation at a later phase

**Elective Part II: Faiths in Action (Choose ONE only)**

Experiential learning activities are organised and structured around religious teachings and the way they relate to shared human experience. Teachers can help students to reflect on these learning experiences and to explore their meaning.

- Module 1 Learning to serve and serving to learn
- Module 2 Learning from religious practices

## 2.2.1 Compulsory Part: Ethics

This is an introductory study of ethics. The emphasis is on value formation and judgement based on rational thinking. Students have to study certain personal and social issues so as to nurture their abilities to make ethical judgements and informed choices.

### Module 1: Normative Ethics

Units	Related Phenomena/concepts	Explanatory Notes
The Nature of Morality	Moral principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic moral principles such as kindness, harm avoidance, respect for autonomy and loyalty</li> <li>• differences between moral principles and moral rules: moral principles are applied universally and moral rules have the meaning of behaviour restraint</li> </ul>
	Moral reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarification of moral concepts</li> <li>• upholding the value of rational thinking</li> <li>• sustaining an open-minded attitude (without self-interest or prejudice)</li> </ul>
	Pluralism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese and Western values and morality</li> <li>• seeking possible consensus and respecting the differences among people who hold various moral principles in a pluralistic society (e.g. tolerance and respect)</li> </ul>
	Morality and religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relationship between morality and religion: contradictory, mutually supplemented or not related</li> </ul>
Theory of Conduct	Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the priority of the good over the right</li> <li>• judgement of right or wrong depends on the goodness or badness of the consequences (e.g. Utilitarianism: good consequences mean right, bad consequences mean wrong)</li> <li>• Act-Utilitarianism and Rule-Utilitarianism</li> </ul>
	Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the priority of the right over the good</li> <li>• judgement of right or wrong according to the nature of the action itself (e.g. Kantian: duties are right regardless of consequences)</li> <li>• the possible incompatibility of duties (e.g. fairness may not be in line with loyalty)</li> </ul>

**Module 1: Normative Ethics**

Units	Related Phenomena/concepts	Explanatory Notes
Theory of Value and Virtue	Intrinsic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• definition of intrinsic value: the built-in value of the matter itself</li> <li>• examples to illustrate the meaning of intrinsic value</li> </ul>
	Instrumental value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• definition of instrumental value: value desirably judged in terms of achievement of other ends</li> <li>• examples to illustrate the meaning of instrumental value</li> </ul>
	Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an essential and distinguishing attribute of something or someone</li> <li>• desirable qualities of loyalty, filial piety, integrity, fairness, honesty, responsibility, prudence, courage, etc.</li> <li>• undesirable qualities of lies and cheating, selfishness, retaliation, jealousy, etc.</li> </ul>
	Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ranking among competing virtues (e.g. loyalty and filial piety)</li> </ul>
	Conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• virtues and values may not be compatible (e.g. honesty may not be compatible with compassion)</li> </ul>

## Module 2: Personal and Social Issues

Units	Related Phenomena/concepts	Explanatory Notes
Human Rights	Inherent dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• why human rights should be respected and how they form an essential constituent or characteristic of being human</li> <li>• situations which deny inherent dignity</li> </ul>
	Nature of rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rights and duties</li> <li>• rights and the rule of law</li> <li>• duties and protecting one's rights</li> <li>• human rights and development of history</li> </ul>
	Civil and political rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning of the following concepts from a specific perspective (e.g. children's rights/women's rights/rights of freedom from racial discrimination)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rights of privacy, access to information, belief, personal expression, association and freedom of person (prevention of slavery and forced labour), etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• the impacts of pluralism, elaboration of reasonable restrictions and implementation through local legislation</li> </ul>
	Economic, social and cultural rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning of the following concepts from a specific perspective (e.g. children's rights/women's rights/rights of freedom from racial discrimination)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rights to work and just treatment, subsistence, health care, education, housing and enjoyment of culture, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• specific indicators for the implementation of rights, such as: availability, accessibility and adequacy of human rights protective measures</li> <li>• the impacts of pluralism, elaboration of reasonable restrictions, and implementation through local legislation.</li> </ul>



**Module 2: Personal and Social Issues**

Units	Related Phenomena/concepts	Explanatory Notes
	Prevention of discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the roots of discrimination</li> <li>• different manifestations of discrimination</li> <li>• some past and present examples of discrimination</li> </ul>
	Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ways in which one exercises autonomy rights</li> </ul>
Life and Death	Right to raise a family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to raise a family or not to raise a family</li> <li>• personal and social considerations</li> </ul>
	Birth control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• causes of and reasons for birth control</li> <li>• views on birth control from different cultural, political and religious perspectives</li> </ul>
	Abortion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• causes of and reasons for abortion</li> <li>• ethical considerations: pro-life or pro-choice</li> </ul>
	Ageing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal, cultural, religious and philosophical attitudes towards ageing</li> </ul>
	Suffering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal, cultural, religious and philosophical attitudes towards suffering</li> </ul>
	Suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsibility to self, to others and to society; consequences of decisions, respect and love for one another</li> <li>• ethical considerations</li> </ul>
	Euthanasia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• categories of euthanasia: active euthanasia, passive euthanasia, voluntary euthanasia, non-voluntary euthanasia and involuntary euthanasia</li> <li>• ethical considerations</li> </ul>
	Capital punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• theories of punishment: deterrence, retribution and transformation</li> <li>• ethical considerations</li> </ul>

**Module 2: Personal and Social Issues**

Units	Related Phenomena/concepts	Explanatory Notes
Sex, Companionship and Family	Heterosexual and homosexual relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• love and sexual relationship</li> <li>• values and characteristics of heterosexual relationship</li> <li>• ethical issues in the homosexuality debate</li> </ul>
	The single life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• causes of and reasons for having a single life</li> <li>• different attitudes towards the single life</li> <li>• consequences of living a single life</li> </ul>
	Premarital and extramarital sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different attitudes towards premarital sex</li> <li>• consequences of extramarital sex on spouse and family</li> </ul>
	Marriage and divorce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meaning of marriage</li> <li>• elements of a good marriage</li> <li>• causes of divorce and its consequences</li> </ul>
	Pornography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• causes of pornographic activities</li> <li>• reasons for supporting or opposing pornography</li> <li>• attitudes towards pornography</li> </ul>
	Prostitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• causes of prostitution</li> <li>• reasons for supporting or opposing prostitution</li> <li>• attitudes towards prostitution</li> </ul>
	The family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• functions of the family for individuals and society</li> <li>• impact on the family system of modern society</li> <li>• how the family system responds to the issues of companionship</li> <li>• how forms of companionship illuminate one another</li> </ul>

## Module 2: Personal and Social Issues

Units	Related Phenomena/concepts	Explanatory Notes
Bioethics	Medical ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relationship between health care professionals and patients</li> <li>• rights of patients</li> </ul>
	Gender selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reasons for gender selection</li> <li>• ethical issues in gender selection</li> </ul>
	Genetic engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meaning of genetic engineering</li> <li>• ethical arguments for or against genetic engineering</li> </ul>
	Cloning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the cloning debates</li> <li>• ethical arguments for or against cloning</li> </ul>
Environmental Ethics	Pollution and consumerism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• causes of environmental pollution</li> <li>• consumption and its environmental consequences</li> <li>• how materialistic values influence the relationship between human society and the environment</li> </ul>
	Use and exploitation of the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• arguments for or against using and exploiting nature</li> </ul>
	Biodiversity and conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• instrumental and intrinsic value of nature: maintenance of ecological balance and biodiversity</li> <li>• importance of conservation to environmental protection</li> <li>• arguments for or against using animals for food and experimentation</li> </ul>
	Global village and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiple meanings of sustainable development</li> <li>• common goal and conflicts between economic development and environmental protection</li> <li>• need for a global perspective in solving environmental problems</li> </ul>

**Module 2: Personal and Social Issues**

<b>Units</b>	<b>Related Phenomena/concepts</b>	<b>Explanatory Notes</b>
Business and Economic Ethics	Justice/fairness/equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meaning of justice/fairness/equality</li> <li>• exploring justice/fairness/equality in policies, such as tax and social welfare</li> <li>• issues from a justice/fairness/equality perspective (e.g. fair trade, syndicated loan, corruption, industrial action)</li> </ul>
	Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the origin of poverty</li> <li>• causes of poverty in a globalized world and its solutions</li> </ul>
	Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ways by which advertisements transmit messages and values</li> <li>• positive and negative effects of advertisements</li> <li>• values that guide advertisements</li> </ul>
	Social responsibility of corporations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• profit motive and social responsibility</li> <li>• obligations to stake-holders such as consumers, the community and shareholders</li> <li>• ethical considerations related to the production process and outcomes</li> </ul>
Media Ethics	Information and entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the right of a person to know and to be informed, and the role of the mass media in modern life (e.g. to transmit information, facilitate communication and provide entertainment)</li> </ul>
	Freedom of speech and editorial independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the significance of freedom of speech in human society and its relations with the mass media</li> <li>• the power of freedom of speech and how the media can abuse it</li> <li>• the need for critical evaluation and public accountability</li> <li>• problems with media owned by corporations or political parties in a globalized world</li> </ul>
	Code of ethics and professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• professional conduct in the mass media (respect for the individual and for privacy)</li> <li>• role and mission of media professionals: report the facts and promote justice (legal, moral and professional values considerations)</li> </ul>

**Module 2: Personal and Social Issues**

<b>Units</b>	<b>Related Phenomena/concepts</b>	<b>Explanatory Notes</b>
	Media Ethics issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the impact of stereotyping on society</li><li>• dangers of misleading information, indoctrination and emotive provocation</li><li>• censorship: arguments for and against censorship; balance between protecting freedom, privacy and public interest</li><li>• changes and concerns brought about by new media (including fake news, online public trials and privacy)</li></ul>

2.2.2 Elective Part I: Religious Traditions (Choose **ONE** only)

**Module 1: Buddhism**

Unit 1: History of Buddhism

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory Notes
Rise of Buddhism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical background</li> </ul>	The influence of Indigenous Indian culture and Aryan culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• life and culture of aboriginal societies in ancient India</li> <li>• social changes after the Aryan invasion</li> <li>• founding of the four caste system and its impacts</li> <li>• the teachings of Brahmanism, revolutionary ideas and practices of the samanas at the time of the Buddha</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life of the Buddha</li> </ul>	Birth Growing up  Renunciation Search for teachers Practice of austerity Giving up austerity, enlightenment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• family background and birth</li> <li>• understanding of human life and the world during childhood</li> <li>• education and marriage</li> <li>• the four encounters and renunciation</li> <li>• practising asceticism and meditation</li> <li>• self-mortification</li> <li>• abandoning asceticism</li> <li>• enlightenment</li> </ul>
	First turning of the wheel of dharma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first Sermon on the Four Noble Truths</li> <li>• meaning of the Four Noble Truths in Buddhism</li> </ul>

Unit 1: History of Buddhism

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory Notes
	Preaching along the river Ganges  Nirvana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• followers of the Buddha from different castes: Ananda Yasa, Sariputra, Maudgalyayana, Bimbisara, Anathapindada and Upali, etc.</li> <li>• last teachings and nirvana</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of the Buddhist Canon</li> </ul>	First and Second Councils  The Tripitaka: its significance and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cause, process, outcome and impact of the First Council organised by Maha Kasyapa after the Buddha's Nirvana</li> <li>• cause, process, outcome and impact of the Second Council</li> <li>• contents of Tripitaka</li> </ul>
Spreading of Buddhism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Buddhism in India</li> </ul>	Early Buddhism (from the time of the Buddha to around one century after the Buddha's nirvana) Schisms and Sectarian Buddhism The rise of Mahayana Buddhism Decline and extinction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• early Buddhist doctrines and the life of the early sangha</li> <li>• Schism and the formation of Sectarian Buddhism</li> <li>• origin and development of Mahayana Buddhism</li> <li>• causes of the decline and disappearance of Buddhism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Buddhism in China</li> </ul>	The Introduction and Development of Buddhism in China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduction to and development in China, (including the periods of introduction, growth, maturity, decline and revival)</li> </ul>

Unit 1: History of Buddhism

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory Notes
Contemporary Buddhism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theravada Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism</li> </ul>	The distinctive teachings and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• distinctive teachings and organisations of contemporary Theravada Buddhism</li> <li>• distinctive teachings and organisations of contemporary Chinese Buddhism</li> <li>• distinctive teachings and organisations of contemporary Tibetan Buddhism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Buddhism in Hong Kong</li> </ul>	Development of Buddhism in Hong Kong The roles of Chinese Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism in the development of Buddhism in Hong Kong  Social contributions of Buddhism in Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduction and development of Chinese Buddhism in Hong Kong</li> <li>• introduction and development of Theravada Buddhism in Hong Kong</li> <li>• introduction and development of Tibetan Buddhism in Hong Kong</li> <li>• the services of Buddhism in Hong Kong, including social welfare, medical services and education</li> </ul>



Unit 2: Basic Buddhist Doctrines

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four Noble Truths</li> </ul>	<p>Truth of Suffering</p> <p>Truth of Arising of Suffering</p> <p>Truth of Cessation of Suffering</p> <p>Truth of methods for ending suffering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning and value of the Four Noble Truths</li> <li>the Truth of Suffering: phenomena of unsatisfactoriness in life</li> <li>the Truth of the Arising of Suffering: defilements and their causes</li> <li>the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering: extinguishments of defilements – Nirvana</li> <li>the Truth of the Path: means to the extinguishment of defilements – the Eightfold Paths</li> <li>the relationships between the Four Noble Truths</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependent Origination</li> </ul>	<p>Significance of the Dependent Origination</p> <p>Meaning and Development of the Dependent Origination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of Dependent Origination</li> <li>the relationship between Dependent Origination and Dependent Arisen</li> <li>the explanation of life and existence by Dependent Origination</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twelve links of Dependent Origination</li> </ul>	<p>Meaning of each link</p> <p>Rebirth and liberation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the name and meaning of each link</li> <li>explanation of the arising and cessation of life by the Twelve links of Dependent Origination</li> </ul>

Unit 2: Basic Buddhist Doctrines

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Karma and rebirth</li> </ul>	Meaning of karma and rebirth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of karma, karmic causes, karmic efficacy, karmic retribution</li> <li>the relationship between karmic retribution and rebirth</li> <li>types of karma: determinate karma, indeterminate karma, shared karma and individual karma</li> <li>have reflection on: taking control of one's destiny; mind as the master of life; one reaps what one sows; treat all sentient beings as equals; rebirth is suffering, etc</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five aggregates and non-self</li> </ul>	Composition of the five aggregates  Meaning of non-self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of the five aggregates</li> <li>the characteristics of the five aggregates: non-identical, impermanent, non-voluntary</li> <li>the abandonment of attachment and the attainment of nirvana</li> </ul>

Unit 3: Buddhist Practices

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic Buddhist practices</li> </ul>	<p>Tripod of Buddhist practices: discipline, concentration and wisdom</p> <p>Distinctive practices of the five vehicles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of discipline, concentration and wisdom</li> <li>overcoming the three poisons (desire, hatred and ignorance) by the tripod of Buddhist practice</li> <li>the vehicles of human beings, celestial beings, sravakas, pratyeka-buddhas and bodhisattvas</li> <li>differences in motivation, practice and attainment of the five vehicles</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practices of the vehicles of human beings and celestial beings</li> </ul>	<p>The aim of rebirth as human beings and celestial beings</p> <p>Taking the three refuges and practising the five precepts</p> <p>Practising the ten virtues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the vehicles of human beings and celestial beings are the foundation of Bodhisattva vehicle</li> <li>the meaning of taking refuge</li> <li>the meaning of the three treasures: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha</li> <li>the five precepts: the fundamental precepts (refraining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and lying); the protective precept (refrain from consuming intoxicants)</li> <li>the ten virtues: three body virtues (refraining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct); four verbal virtues (refraining from lying, licentious speech, duplicitous speech and harsh speech); three mental virtues (refraining from desire, hatred and ignorance)</li> </ul>

Unit 3: Buddhist Practices

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sravaka and the pratyekabuddha vehicles</li> </ul>	<p>The aims of liberating from rebirth, attaining freedom from suffering, and achieving the stage of sravaka and pratyekabuddha</p> <p>Practising the four foundations of mindfulness</p> <p>Realising the truths of impermanence, suffering, emptiness and non-self</p> <p>Practising the Eightfold Paths</p> <p>Attaining the four stages of enlightenment and nirvana</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the way to the rapid cessation of rebirth and personal deliverance</li> <li>the meaning of sravaka and pratyekabuddha</li> <li>the meaning of arhatship</li> <li>the meaning of mindfulness</li> <li>the four foundations of mindfulness: body, feelings, state of mind and dharma</li> <li>impermanence: the phenomenon of constant change</li> <li>suffering: suffering associated with the unpleasant; suffering arising from the inevitable destruction of the pleasurable; suffering inherent in sentient life</li> <li>emptiness: non-identical, impermanent and non-voluntary</li> <li>non-self: absence of an identical, permanent and voluntary substance</li> <li>the meaning of the right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration</li> <li>the relationship between the Eightfold Paths and the tripod of Buddhist practice</li> <li>the meaning of the four fruits: srota-apanna-phala, sakradagami-phala, anagami-phala, arhat-phala</li> <li>the meaning of nirvana</li> </ul>

Unit 3: Buddhist Practices

Topics	Key Points	Explanatory notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practices of Bodhisattva vehicle</li> </ul>	<p>The aim of universal liberation</p> <p>Dependent origination and emptiness</p> <p>Practising the six perfections and four all-embracing virtues</p> <p>The mind of great compassion and Bodhicitta</p> <p>Attaining the Great Bodhicitta, the great nirvana and the Buddhahood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meaning of bodhisattva</li> <li>realising the truth of emptiness</li> <li>the six perfections: charity, discipline, forbearance, effort, concentration, wisdom</li> <li>the four all-embracing virtues: charity, kind words, beneficial acts, and adaptation of oneself to others</li> <li>the mind of great compassion: help sentient beings to become free from suffering</li> <li>Bodhicitta: the pursuit of enlightenment</li> <li>the Great Bodhicitta: the ultimate and perfect enlightenment</li> <li>the great nirvana: cessation of all forms of everlasting defilement and rebirth</li> <li>the Buddhahood: three bodies (dharma-body, retribution-body, transformation-body)</li> </ul>

## Module 2: Christianity

### Unit 1: Background

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
Textual Background The faith of the Old Testament	The Passover	Ex. 12:21-42	To point out how God acts to save and liberate the Israelites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the first Passover: salvation and judgement</li> <li>Pharaoh frees the Israelites</li> </ul>
	The Sinai Covenant	Ex. 19:1-8, 20:1-21	To show that Israel became God's chosen people by covenant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God invites the Israelites to become His chosen people by covenant, and to serve Him as priests</li> </ul>
	Exile	Mic. 3:9-12 Ezek. 6:8-10 2 Kings 25: 1-21; 2 Chr. 36: 20-21	To explain the reasons why the Israelite nation fell into ruin: idolatry and social injustice To show the situation of the Israelites when they were exiled to Babylon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>King Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon leads his army to Jerusalem and destroys the Temple, and the Israelites were exiled</li> </ul>
	Promise of a New Covenant	Jer. 31:3-4, 31-34; Ezek. 36:22-28	To show how God promises to make a new and better covenant to bring the people into an even closer relationship with Himself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>background: (1) Israel repeatedly breaks the covenant and turn to idols; God punishes them by war, defeat and exile; (2) God's purpose is to change His people so as to demonstrate His holiness to all nations</li> <li>the new covenant brings purification, forgiveness, a new heart and mind, and an experiential knowledge of God</li> </ul>

Unit 1: Background

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
	The Messianic Hope	Isa. 11:1-9	<p>To explain the Jewish hope which was focused on the coming of the Messiah:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Messiah will come as a shoot growing from the stump of David's dynasty</li> <li>like David, the Messiah is to be empowered by the Spirit and to rule in justice</li> </ul>
History and identity of Israel in the Old Testament	<p>The theme of election</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meaning of the chosen people</li> <li>Circumcision</li> </ul> <p>The theme of covenant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature and content of the covenants</li> </ul>	<p>Deut. 7:6-9, 14:2; Ps. 33:12; Isa. 14:1, 41:8-9</p> <p><u>Abraham</u> in Gen. 12:1-3, 15:1-21, 17:1-22; <u>Moses</u> in Ex. 19:4-5, 20:1-17, 23:20-33, 24:1-8; <u>David</u> in 2 Sam. 7:16, Ps. 89:2-4</p>	<p>To show the rights and duties of the Israelites as God's chosen people</p> <p>To show the reasons for and meanings of circumcision</p> <p>To show the nature of the covenants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God takes initiatives to set up covenants</li> <li>people have to obey God so as to obey the covenants</li> </ul> <p>To understand the contents and nature of different covenants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the covenant between God and Abraham</li> <li>the covenant between God and the Israelites after exodus</li> <li>the covenant between God and David</li> </ul> <p>To understand the relationship between covenant and election</p>
Socio-political Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Palestine in the first century A.D.</li> </ul> <p>Roman occupation: To explain the political situation in Palestine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Procurator</li> <li>King Herod</li> </ul>		To introduce the political situation in Palestine in the first century A.D.

Unit 1: Background

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Key Points</b>	<b>Biblical References</b>	<b>Explanatory Notes</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sanhedrin</li></ul>		
	<p>To show the characteristics of some Jewish sects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sadducees</li><li>• Pharisees</li><li>• Zealots</li><li>• Herodians</li><li>• Essenes</li></ul> <p>Important historical event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem in A.D. 70</li></ul>		<p>To understand the background of the Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots, Herodians and Essenes</p> <p>To show what happens in the destruction of the Temple and its consequences</p>



Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<p>Jesus' Ministry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birth and childhood</li> </ul>	<p>Matthew's accounts of the birth of Jesus: To show that the birth of Jesus is prophesied in the Old Testament</p> <p>Luke's accounts of the birth of Jesus</p> <p>To describe the childhood of Jesus</p>	<p>Mt. 1:18-25, 2:1-23</p> <p>Lk. 1:26-56</p> <p>Lk. 2:1-52</p>	<p>To introduce Matthew and Luke's accounts of the birth and childhood of Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the coming of the Son of God: descendant of David, born to be King</li> <li>• born of a virgin</li> <li>• to be born in Bethlehem</li> <li>• the killing of children</li> <li>• the escape to Egypt and return to Nazareth</li> <li>• the role played by Mary, Joseph, the angels, the wise men, King Herod, Simeon and Anna</li> <li>• the coming of the Son of God: human, born of a virgin</li> <li>• the role played by Mary, Joseph, the angels and shepherds</li> <li>• family background</li> <li>• physical and intellectual development</li> <li>• sense of communion with God the Father</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preparation                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Baptism</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>John the Baptist</p>	<p>Mk. 1:2-8, 6:14-29</p>	<p>To show the character and work of John the Baptist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John's appearance and behaviour</li> <li>• John's message, role and ministry</li> <li>• John's imprisonment and death</li> <li>• the importance of repentance and forgiveness</li> </ul>

Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temptation</li>   <li>▪ Jesus calls ordinary people to be His disciples</li>   <li>- Jesus sends out the Apostles</li> </ul>	<p>Jesus' baptism</p> <p>The temptation of Jesus</p> <p>Jesus calls four fishermen to be His disciples</p> <p>Jesus calls Levi, the tax-collector to be His disciple</p> <p>Jesus chooses the 12 Apostles</p> <p>Jesus sends out the Apostles to preach</p>	<p>Mk. 1:9-11</p> <p>Mk. 1:12-13; Lk. 4:1-13</p> <p>Mk. 1:16-20</p> <p>Mk. 2:13-17</p> <p>Mk. 3:13-19</p> <p>Mk. 6:7-13</p>	<p>To point out the importance of Jesus' baptism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the meaning of baptism in the days of Jesus and today</li> <li>• Jesus coming to John for His baptism</li> <li>• the signs of God's approval of Jesus</li> </ul> <p>To explain the significance of the temptation of Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the background to the temptation of Jesus</li> <li>• the nature of the temptation</li> <li>• Jesus' replies</li> </ul> <p>To demonstrate how it is possible to overcome temptations in daily life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obedience to God, submission to the teaching of the Bible, and determination to resist Satan</li> </ul> <p>To show that discipleship is a call from Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus calls ordinary people to be His disciples</li> <li>• the meaning of "disciple"</li> <li>• the appointment of the 12 Apostles</li> <li>• the meaning of "apostle"</li> <li>• the work, power (authority) and mission of the disciples/apostles</li> </ul>

Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miracles                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Healing</li> <li>▪ Authority over evil spirits</li> <li>▪ Power over nature</li> <li>▪ Others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Jesus heals a leper                      The man with a paralysed hand                      Jairus' daughter                      The woman who touched Jesus' cloak                      A woman's faith</p> <p>Jesus heals a man with evil spirits                      Jesus heals a boy with an evil spirit</p> <p>Jesus has power over a storm                      Jesus has power to feed 5,000 people</p> <p>The Pharisees set a trap for Jesus by demanding a miracle</p>	<p>Mk. 1:40-45                      Mk. 3:1-6                      Mk. 5:22-23, 35-43                      Mk. 5: 24-34                      Mk. 7:24-30</p> <p>Mk. 5:1-20                      Mk. 9:14-29</p> <p>Mk. 4:35-41                      Mk. 6:30-44</p> <p>Mk. 8:11-13</p>	<p>To show that Jesus has the power to heal and that it is part of His ministry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus performs the healing miracles because of His compassion and the people's faith</li> <li>• the different reactions of the people to these miracles</li> <li>• Jesus keeps His identity hidden in some of these miracles</li> </ul> <p>To show that Jesus has the power over evil spirits and that defeating evil spirits is part of His ministry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus fights to destroy evil spirits because of his compassion and the people's faith</li> <li>• people's reaction to Jesus' words and deeds</li> <li>• Jesus reveals His identity in these miracles</li> </ul> <p>To show that Jesus exercises His power over nature out of His concern for the people's needs, and to point out the importance of faith in facing difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus calms a storm and feeds a multitude</li> <li>• the disciples are limited by their lack of faith and understanding</li> </ul> <p>To emphasise why Jesus performed miracles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the misunderstanding of people about performing miracles</li> <li>• Jesus' standpoint on performing miracles</li> </ul>

Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
	Transfiguration	Mk. 9:2-8	To point out the glory of Jesus in His transfiguration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirmation of the divinity of Jesus</li> <li>• the appearance of Moses and Elijah, and the voice of God acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passion               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jesus' predictions about His suffering</li>   <li>▪ Before suffering</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Jesus' three predictions about His suffering           Entrance into Jerusalem           The anointing at Bethany	Mk. 8:31-33, 9:30-32, 10:32-34           Mk. 11:1-10           Mk. 14:1-11	To show why the Messiah has to suffer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus' three predictions about His suffering</li> <li>• the Messianic Secret</li> <li>• Peter's misunderstanding of Jesus' role</li> <li>• Jesus' preparation of His disciples for His coming suffering</li> </ul> To show how Jesus makes His role as the Messiah public, thereby fulfilling the prophecy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• riding on the colt into Jerusalem is a prophetic sign of Messiahship</li> <li>• the way the people welcome Jesus shows their misunderstanding of Messiahship</li> <li>• Palm Sunday</li> </ul> To show that the anointing is a preparation for Jesus' death: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Jewish leaders' plot to arrest Jesus secretly</li> <li>• Jesus praises Mary's deed</li> <li>• Judas agrees to betray Jesus</li> </ul>

Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arrest</li> </ul>	The Lord’s Supper	Mk. 14:12-31	To explain the meaning of the Last Supper: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus foretells His coming suffering and the reaction of the disciples</li> <li>• the Feast of the Unleavened Bread and the Passover</li> <li>• the significance of the Last Supper in the days of the disciples and in the church today</li> <li>• Maundy/Holy Thursday</li> </ul>
	Gethsemane	Mk. 14:32-42	To point out how Jesus as a human being shrinks away from His suffering, but finally determines to do the will of God at all costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus’ example: to pursue the way of God in prayer</li> <li>• Jesus exhorts the disciples to be watchful and to pray for strength to resist temptation</li> </ul>
	Arrest	Mk. 14:43-52	To give an account of the unjust arrest of Jesus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the roles of Judas, the guards, the disciples, the Jewish leaders and the false witnesses</li> </ul>
	Before the Council	Mk. 14:53-65	To show how Jesus is condemned for acknowledging His identity as the Messiah: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Jewish Council</li> </ul>

Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crucifixion and burial</li> </ul>	Peter's denial	Mk. 14:66-72	To explain why and how Peter fails and denies Jesus, and to help students learn from Peter's failure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in spite of Jesus' warning, Peter denies Him</li> <li>• the reasons for Peter's failure</li> <li>• the importance of repentance</li> </ul>
	Before Pilate	Mk. 15:1-15	To show how Jesus voluntarily submits to the injustice done to Him: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the unjust and illegal trial</li> <li>• the parts played by Pilate, the Jewish leaders and the crowd</li> </ul>
	Crucifixion and death	Mk. 15:16-41	To give an account of the Crucifixion and explain its meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the meaning of "crucifixion"</li> <li>• the fulfilment of prophecies</li> <li>• Jesus' words on the cross</li> </ul> To compare the reaction of different people to the crucifixion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the soldiers, Simon of Cyrene, the two bandits, the priests and scribes, and the bystanders</li> </ul>
	Burial	Mk. 15:42-47	To give an account of Jesus' death and burial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• witnesses to Jesus' death: Joseph of Arimathea, the Roman Officer, and some women</li> <li>• Jewish burial</li> <li>• Good Friday</li> </ul>



Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ways to the Kingdom of God</li> </ul>	The Mustard Seed  Repent and believe the Gospel Virtue of love Jesus blesses little children The rich young ruler	Mk. 4:30-34  Mk. 1:15 Mk. 9:41-50 Mk. 10:13-16 Mk. 10:17-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mustard Seed: the outward visible growth of the Kingdom</li> <li>• demands repentance and faith</li> <li>• purity of heart</li> <li>• childlike humility</li> <li>• whole-hearted devotion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will of God                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachings for His disciples                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Life style</li> <li>- Promises</li> <li>- Cost and mission</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Parables                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parables about the Kingdom of God</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Humility and service To be a servant of others To remember Jesus  Whoever is not against us is for us Detachment and rewards  Receive the Holy Spirit  Take up one's cross and follow Jesus Go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature  The Sower  The Tenants in the Vineyard	Mk. 9:33-37 Mk. 10:42-45 Mk. 14:22-25  Mk. 9:38-41 Mk. 10:28-30  Jn. 20:19-23  Mk. 8:34-38  Mk. 16:15-20  Mk. 4:1-20  Mk. 12:1-12	To understand how to take the responsibilities of a citizen in the Kingdom of God: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the least is the greatest in the Kingdom of God</li> <li>• take Jesus as a role model in serving others</li> <li>• take Jesus' body and blood in order to remember Jesus' salvation for all</li> <li>• a willingness to accept other servants of God</li> <li>• to give up what one has in the world will receive God's reward</li> <li>• the risen Jesus sends his disciples, grants the Holy Spirit and the power of remitting and retaining sins to them</li> <li>• renunciation and self-denial</li> <li>• preaching the Gospel is the mission given by Jesus before His Ascension</li> </ul> To explain Jesus' purpose in using parables, and to introduce some parables and show their relevance to our daily lives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Sower: the different responses to God's message</li> <li>• the Tenants in the Vineyard: the Jewish leaders' rejection of the prophets and the Messiah</li> </ul>



Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes	
- Parables about the End of Days	Ten Virgins	Mt. 25:1-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ten Virgins: people have to prepare well for the arrival of the End of Days all the time</li> <li>the Sheep and the Goats: the qualifications to enter into the Kingdom of God at the End of Day</li> <li>the Unmerciful Servant: the basic attitude of forgiveness</li> <li>the Good Samaritan: all people are our neighbours</li> <li>the Talents: the need to use our talents well in order to be a good steward of talent</li> <li>the Lost Sheep and The Lost Son: God's unconditional love and welcome for sinners who repent</li> </ul>	
	The Sheep and the Goats	Mt. 25:31-46		
	- Parables about moral conduct	The Unmerciful Servant		Mt. 18:21-35
		The Good Samaritan		Lk. 10:25-37
- Other parables	The Talents	Mt. 25:14-30		
	The Lost Sheep	Lk. 15:1-7		
	The Lost Son	Lk. 15:11-32		
▪ Law			To point out the true meaning of the Law and traditions, and correct the misunderstanding of the Jewish leaders:	
- Laws and traditions	The greatest commandment	Mk. 12:28-34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God, one should love God and one's neighbours, which is more important than offerings and sacrifices</li> <li>the true meaning of forgiving sin</li> </ul>	
	Forgiving sin	Mk. 2:1-12		
- Debates on Laws and traditions	Teachers of the Law condemn Jesus for eating with the outcasts	Mk. 2:16-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God also loves sinners, and Jesus states that He comes for sinners</li> </ul>	
	Conflict over ritual fasting	Mk. 2:18-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the incompatibility of the old and new spirit</li> </ul>	
	Conflict over the Sabbath	Mk. 2:23-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Sabbath is made for people's sake, and not as a burden</li> </ul>	
	Clean and unclean	Mk. 7:1-5, 14-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the real source of uncleanness</li> </ul>	
	Traditions to the elderly	Mk. 7:6-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it is wrong to give traditional laws a higher position than the Law</li> </ul>	
	A question on divorce	Mk. 10:1-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the true will of God about marriage</li> </ul>	

Unit 2: The Origin of Christianity - Jesus Christ

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<p>- Sermon on the Mount</p>	A question about paying taxes	Mk. 12:13-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people have different duties in response to their different roles in the world</li> <li>• resurrection exists</li> </ul>
	<p>A question about rising from death</p> <p>Sermon on the Mount:</p> <p>Characteristics of the citizens of the Kingdom</p>	Mk. 12:18-27	
	The Beatitudes	Mt. 5:3-12	(a) ways that lead to true happiness
	Salt and light	Mt. 5:13-16	(b) to be salt and light in the world
	The six antitheses	Mt. 5:21-48	(c) based on a proper relationship with God rather than religious rituals
	Emphasis on true piety	Mt. 6:1-18	(d) to trust God and not any material thing
	Attitude towards life	Mt. 6:19-7:11	(e) to maintain good human relationships by forgiving and not by judging others
	The Golden rule	Mt. 7:12	(f) to build one's life on the teaching of Jesus and not the Jewish tradition
	Three warnings	Mt. 7:13-27	(g) to strive for absolute morality and impartial love

Unit 3: The Continuation of Jesus' Ministry

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<p>Jesus' Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesus in the eyes of the Jews</li> </ul>	<p>Using the power of Beelzebub</p> <p>Jesus is rejected at Nazareth</p> <p>Jesus is regarded as the risen John the Baptist</p> <p>Jesus is regarded as John the Baptist, Elijah and one of the prophets</p> <p>Rabbi/teacher</p>	<p>Mk. 3:20-22</p> <p>Mk. 6:1-4</p> <p>Mk. 6:14-16</p> <p>Mt. 23:8-10</p>	<p>To show different views of Jesus' identity from different people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>teachers of the Law accuse Jesus that He is inspired by the devil since He has the power to cast out unclean spirits</li> <li>people in Nazareth know Jesus to be a carpenter and do not accept His higher status</li> <li>Herod Antipas regards Jesus as the risen John the Baptist</li> <li>people other than the disciples regard Jesus as John the Baptist, Elijah and one of the prophets</li> <li>people regard Jesus as a rabbi, teacher</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesus in the eyes of His disciples</li> </ul>	<p>Son of God</p> <p>Messiah</p>	<p>Mk. 1:1, 3:11, 5:7, 14:61, 15:39</p> <p>Mk. 8:29, 14:61-62, 15:32</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the disciples understand Jesus as Son of God as a result of His miracle-performing</li> <li>the Jewish views of Messiah at Jesus' time</li> <li>Jesus' interpretation of the meaning of Messiah</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesus' understanding of Himself</li> </ul>	<p>Son of Man</p>	<p>Mk. 2:10, 2:28, 8:31, 10:45, 14:62</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the meanings of Son of Man: (1) has the right to forgive sins; (2) Lord of the Sabbath; (3) has to suffer; (4) the one who serves people; (5) will come back from heaven in glory</li> </ul>
<p>Development of the Early Church</p>	<p>The Ascension</p>	<p>Acts 1:6-11</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the promise of the Holy Spirit and the power to witness</li> <li>the Ascension</li> </ul>

Unit 3: The Continuation of Jesus' Ministry

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
	<p>Pentecost – the coming of the Holy Spirit</p> <p>Peter's preaching</p> <p>Persecution of the early believers (Stephen and James)</p> <p>Conversion of Saul</p>	<p>Acts 2</p> <p>Acts 2</p> <p>Acts 5:17-33, 6:8-15, 7:54-8:3, 12:1-5</p> <p>Acts 9:1-19</p>	<p>To show that the Pentecost is the birthday of the church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the form and gift of the Holy Spirit</li> </ul> <p>To introduce the content of the proclamation of the Early Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peter's proclamation begins the active spreading of the Gospel by the Church</li> </ul> <p>To show the courage of the apostles as witnesses of Christ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the apostles, forbidden to preach, choose to obey God and not man</li> <li>• the threat of execution</li> <li>• the faith of Stephen as shown in his arrest and death</li> <li>• Herod executes James</li> </ul> <p>To give an account of the conversion of Saul and its importance for the development of the Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saul's vision of the Risen Lord on the road to Damascus</li> <li>• God reveals His purpose to Ananias and sends him to baptise Saul</li> </ul> <p>To explain the nature of conversion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the meaning of the conversion of Saul:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) complete break with his past</li> <li>(b) freedom from the struggle for righteousness</li> <li>(c) displacement of self</li> <li>(d) complete change of values</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

Unit 3: The Continuation of Jesus' Ministry

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
	Preaching to the Gentiles	Acts 9:20-11:30	To show the source of Peter's power to heal, and to show the Gospel was spread in Judea: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peter heals in the name of Jesus and many people believe</li> </ul> To show how God prepared to reveal His salvation to all: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God gives a vision to Cornelius, a devout Roman centurion</li> <li>• Peter learns in a vision that salvation is for all</li> <li>• Peter explains that the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles is the proof of God's acceptance</li> </ul>
	The Council of Jerusalem	Acts 15:1-21	To explain the reason for calling the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul and Barnabas bring the problem of circumcision to the apostles in Jerusalem</li> </ul> To explain that the compromise of the Early Church enabled Christianity to become a world religion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peter emphasises that salvation by grace is for both Jews and Gentiles</li> <li>• four rules are drawn up to make it easier for Jewish believers accepting Gentiles as Christians</li> </ul>
	The Gospel spreads to Rome (Paul's missionary journeys)	Acts 28:16-30	To show that Paul preaches the Gospel to the Gentiles in Rome
Development of basic Christian belief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salvation</li> </ul>			The influence of Paul in the development of the Christian faith:

Unit 3: The Continuation of Jesus' Ministry

Topics	Key Points	Biblical References	Explanatory Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Paul's three perspectives of salvation</li>   <li>▪ James' concept of salvation</li> </ul>	<p>Change of sovereignty</p> <p>Mystical transformation</p> <p>Justification by faith</p> <p>Faith and work</p>	<p>1Cor. 7:23</p> <p>Rom. 6:15-18</p> <p>2Cor. 5:14-15</p> <p>Rom.1:16-17</p> <p>Jas. 2:14-26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people are free from their sins by the precious blood of Jesus, and become servants of God</li> <li>• actual and symbolic meaning of death and resurrection of Jesus and His people</li>   <li>• the meaning of justification by faith</li> </ul> <p>James' teaching as a complement to Paul's concept of justification by faith</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Commandment</li> </ul>	<p>Love one another</p>	<p>Jn. 13:34, 15:12</p> <p>1Jn. 2:7-11, 3:11-18</p>	<p>To show how John states that Jesus gives a new commandment to His disciples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• love one another: one has to know how to love another in the way Jesus loves His people</li> </ul>

### 2.2.3 Elective Part II: Faiths in Action (Choose **ONE** only)

Experiential learning activities are organised and structured around religious teachings and the way they relate to shared human experience. Students can either engage in a social service programme or visit a place where religious activities are held. Teachers may help students to reflect on these experiences and to explore their meaning.

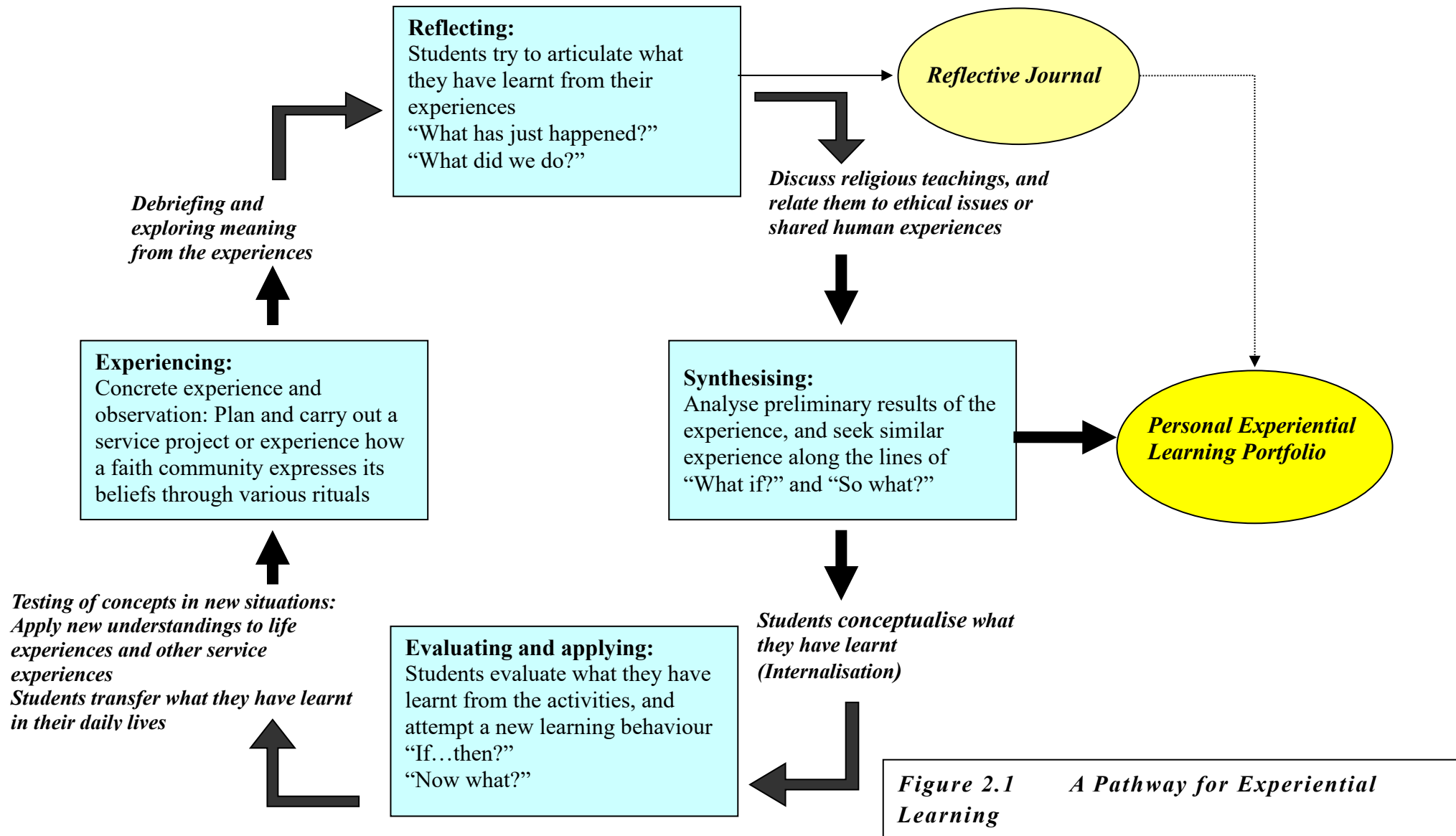
#### **Module 1: Learning to serve and serving to learn**

- Concrete experience and observation: Plan a service project with others and carry it out
- Reflection: Reflect on the experience of serving
- Synthesis and conceptualisation: Gather information, conceptualise and synthesise it with the service experiences into broader issues
- Testing of concepts in new situations: Apply new understanding to life experiences and other service experiences
- Personal service portfolio: Writing reflective journals and service reports to build a portfolio

#### **Module 2 Learning from religious practices (*e.g. visit a religious venue or observe a religious ceremony*)**

- Concrete experience and observation: Experience how a faith community expresses its beliefs and feelings through symbolism/worship/festivals/rituals
- Reflection: Reflect on the experiences gained during the visit
- Synthesis and conceptualisation: Conceptualise and synthesise information and experiences gained in the visit, and compare with other religious experiences they have
- Evaluate their own beliefs and values with reference to the experiences gained in the visit
- Personal visit portfolio: Writing reflective journals and visit reports to build a portfolio

*Remarks: Students are encouraged to visit or observe religious practices that are different from the religious traditions they study in Part II.*





## 2.2.4 Time allocation

The total lesson time for senior secondary ERS curriculum is 250 hours. The curriculum is divided into two parts. About two-fifths of the total lesson time is allocated to the Compulsory Part and three-fifths to the Elective Parts. (including the experiential learning activities: “Faiths in Action”)

The specific allocation is as follows:

### **Compulsory Part: Ethics**

<b>Modules</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Suggested lesson time (hours)</b>
Normative Ethics	The Nature of Morality Theory of Conduct Theory of Value and Virtue	30
Personal and Social Issues	Human Rights Life and Death Sex, Companionship and Family Bioethics Environmental Ethics Business and Economic Ethics Media Ethics	70

### **Elective Part I: Religious Traditions**

<b>Module 1</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Suggested lesson time (hours)</b>
Buddhism	History of Buddhism	30
	Basic Buddhist Doctrines	34
	Buddhist Practices	36

<b>Module 2</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Suggested lesson time (hours)</b>
Christianity	Background	16
	The Origin of Christianity – Jesus Christ	64
	The Continuation of Jesus’ Ministry	20

**Elective Part II:      Faiths in Action**

<b>Modules</b>	<b>Suggested lesson time (hours)</b>
Learning to serve and serving to learn	50
Learning from religious practices	

*Note: For students taking Ethics and Religious Studies as an elective subject, the lesson time can be counted towards that for Other Learning Experiences. (The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education—Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong (EMB, 2005), para. 3.48)*

## Chapter 3 Curriculum Planning

This chapter provides guidelines to help schools and teachers develop a flexible and balanced curriculum that suits the needs, interests and abilities of their students, and the context of the school, in accordance with the central framework provided in Chapter 2.

### 3.1 Guiding Principles

To enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching Ethics and Religious Studies (ERS), teachers are encouraged to consider planning a balanced and coherent curriculum that will enable students to take an active role in ethical and religious enquiry.

The following are major principles underpinning curriculum planning for teachers' reference:

- (a) The primary considerations teachers need to take into account throughout planning are: curriculum aims, students' needs, the school context, and the characteristics of the discipline of ERS.
- (b) Planning should take into consideration what students have achieved in basic education, and provide opportunities to reinforce the knowledge, skills and understanding they acquired in earlier Key Stages.
- (c) The planning should take account of possible links with other subjects as well as the broader aims of the three-year senior secondary curriculum, which include the development of generic skills in the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area (PSHE KLA) and the essential learning experiences required of every student in senior secondary education.
- (d) Flexibility should be allowed in curriculum planning. The arrangement and sequencing of units or topics can be adjusted, so that the breadth and depth of study suits the ability level and orientation of the students.
- (e) The programme should provide sufficient challenge for students of different abilities at senior secondary level.
- (f) The learning and teaching activities and evaluation methods should be varied according to the needs and abilities of the students.
- (g) The programme should prepare students adequately for further study in Ethics or Religion at tertiary level. It should also provide an equally valuable learning experience for those who leave the subject at the end of the third year.

## 3.2 Progression

The following modes of curriculum planning show that the ERS curriculum can be implemented with different configurations. As illustrated below, the modules can be arranged in various ways and “Faiths in Action” can be introduced at different stages. It is suggested that teachers should take their students’ prior learning experiences, interests, abilities and orientations into consideration, and flexibly develop their learning and teaching plans. The following is some modes of planning for teachers’ consideration.

### (a) Mode 1

This mode, which builds on the previous religious education experiences gained in junior secondary level, focuses on Religious Traditions in S4, as this will help to consolidate students’ learning and facilitate effective progression to later studies. Students will gain confidence in exploring familiar religious themes before proceeding to the study of Ethics. The study of Ethics and experiential learning activities will start in S5.

Features:

- Emphasis is placed on Religious Traditions and Ethics in S4 and S5 which has the effect of widening students’ horizons.
- At the beginning of S5, teachers and students start planning experiential learning activities. Through service learning or observing different religious practices, students reflect on shared human experience based on first-hand exposure.
- In S6, students finish the experiential learning activities and complete their learning portfolios for internal assessment.

Year	Ethics / Religious Traditions	Faiths in Action
S4	<b>Elective Part: Religious Traditions</b>	
S5	<b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normative Ethics</li> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 4 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	Preparation
S6	<b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 3 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	Experience
		Evaluation

**Figure 3.1 Suggested Progression: Mode 1**

(b) Mode 2

Experiential learning activities are scheduled throughout S4 to S6. Most of the topics in Religious Traditions (about 2/3) are studied in S4 and the rest are completed in S5. Ethics is studied in S5 and S6.

Features:

- Experiential learning activities are carried out systematically throughout the three years.
- Experiential learning activities have already been started in S4.
- There is greater flexibility in preparing, experiencing and evaluating experiential learning activities.

Year	Ethics / Religious Traditions	Faiths in Action
S4	<b>Elective Part: Religious Traditions</b> Buddhism: 2 out of 3 units Christianity: 1 or 2 out of 3 units	
S5	<b>Elective Part: Religious Traditions</b> Buddhism: 1 out of 3 units Christianity: 1 or 2 out of 3 units  <b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normative Ethics</li> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 3 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	
S6	<b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 4 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	

*Figure 3.2 Suggested Progression: Mode 2*

(c) Mode 3

Experiential learning activities are scheduled throughout S4 to S6. Both Ethics and Religious Traditions are studied in S4. Religious Traditions and Ethics are completed in S5 and S6 respectively.

Features:

- The study of Ethics and Religious Traditions in S4 and S5 brings in broad perspectives and helps students widen their horizons, which facilitate their planning and preparation for the experiential learning activities.
- Experiential learning activities should be planned systematically throughout the three years.
- Students can start learning Ethics in S4 and engage in experiential learning activities right away.
- There is greater flexibility in preparing, experiencing and evaluating experiential learning activities.

Year	Ethics / Religious Traditions	Faiths in Action
S4	<p><b>Elective Part: Religious Traditions</b>                      Buddhism: 1 out of 3 units                      Christianity: 1 or 2 out of 3 units</p> <p><b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normative Ethics</li> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 1 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	
S5	<p><b>Elective Part: Religious Traditions</b>                      Buddhism: 2 out of 3 units                      Christianity: 1 or 2 out of 3 units</p> <p><b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 2 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	
S6	<p><b>Compulsory Part: Ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Issues: 4 out of 7 units</li> </ul>	

**Figure 3.3 Suggested Progression: Mode 3**

### 3.3 Curriculum Planning Strategies

In planning the implementation of the senior secondary ERS curriculum, schools should take advantage of the flexibility allowed in the curriculum design, consider their own strengths and characteristics, and may adopt the following strategies for curriculum planning.

#### 3.3.1 Interfacing Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary Curriculum

The design of this curriculum, like other senior secondary subjects, is based on students learning experiences during basic education. Schools should review the junior secondary curriculum and ensure that students have a solid foundation of knowledge in different disciplines and a sound development of generic skills and positive values and attitudes. The learning experiences in basic education, especially in the PSHE KLA, will support the building of knowledge about religious traditions and ethics and help students make informed decisions and judgements regarding different personal and social issues. Teachers should obtain adequate information about the learning experiences of their students in junior secondary to ensure that they have solid foundations to start with.

#### 3.3.2 Catering for learner diversity

In order to help all students achieve the learning objectives of the curriculum, teachers may vary the degree of support and guidance given to them according to their ability. The cultural and religious diversity among the students should be taken into consideration when planning the curriculum. Some students will have no clearly defined religious background, affiliation or commitment, while others may have deeply held convictions and beliefs. Discussion of religious traditions and ethical issues will be richer where teachers can solicit experiences and views from students with different religious backgrounds. Teachers may also adjust the learning targets, provide a variety of resources and design different learning modes to suit different needs and develop different abilities. In planning the ERS curriculum, teachers should make use of the flexibility allowed in the curriculum design to accommodate differences in students' learning progress.

This curriculum has built in different approaches to religious education and modes of learning. Teachers should capitalise on this and plan for different learning opportunities to cater for students with different styles of learning. For example, experiential learning activities in the Elective Part “Faiths in Action” may be more effective in motivating students with an active personality type to think about religious teachings and moral principles, than studying religious classics or articles.

Differences among students can create good learning opportunities. Teachers may arrange group learning activities that may involve students in playing different roles, which invite them to make different contributions according to their strengths and interests. Students with different religious backgrounds and life experiences can enrich each other's understandings about themes and issues in the curriculum.

### **3.3.3 Making use of ad hoc issues and life events**

ERS curriculum provides ample opportunities for students to apply what they have learnt to what is happening around them and to issues which impact on their lives. Flexibility should be provided in the planning of the curriculum in order to make room for discussion on ad hoc issues and life events which are relevant to the curriculum and have some special significance for students. Teachers should react to those moments when students get excited by local, national or global events. Such themes provide a powerful opportunity for teachers to draw out students' knowledge and to motivate them to learn with commitment. An example is available on the CDI's website, (911 incident and the learning and teaching of the theme "Hatred and Forgiveness",

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/references-and-resources/ethics-and-religious-studies/index.html>) to illustrate the opportunities available for discussion of such important issues.

(Please read *Moral and Civic Education*, Booklet 3A in "*Basic Education Curriculum Guide – Building on Strengths*" Series (EMB, 2002), and also visit <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/doc-reports/guide-basic-edu-curriculum/index.html> for more information about the Life Event Approach to conduct moral and civic education.)

### **3.3.4 Linkages to other learning experiences and informal curricula**

The three-year senior secondary curriculum provides for some 15-35% of total lesson time for "Other Learning Experiences" (OLE), in which 5% or more are allocated for those related to moral and civic education and community service. These learning experiences can, at the same time, enrich students' learning in ERS. For example, students' participation in service learning during the curriculum time for OLE can be part of their learning of Module 1 in Elective Part II on "Learning to Serve and Serving to Learn".

Schools should note that the lesson time for senior secondary ERS curriculum can be counted towards that for OLE. Therefore, when planning for the curriculum of this subject, schools should take into consideration the moral and civic education programme and students'



participation in community service, so as to make the best use of curriculum time and to achieve coherence between different learning experiences.

Schools often use assemblies, form teacher periods and extracurricular activities to enhance the spiritual and moral development of students. Schools might also consider aligning these learning experiences with that of Religious Studies to improve the effectiveness of student learning.

### 3.3.5 Cross-curricular planning

ERS, with its focus on questions of belief and values, attitude and outlook, behaviour and practice, has a major contribution to make in helping students understand and develop a positive attitude towards diversity in a pluralistic society.

Citizenship and Social Development, a core subject in the three-year senior secondary curriculum, provides learning experiences related to the exploration of personal and social issues. ERS too can highlight the many interrelationships between religion and significant human experiences and provide students with opportunities for developing their own ideas and values and for making informed decisions.

ERS is also linked to other subjects in different ways. For example, the study of History and Chinese History might help students understand the historical development of the religious traditions and the impact religions have on the history of the nation and the world. The study of Chinese Language takes values and character building as one of its curriculum aims, this contributes to the development of students' moral reasoning and value judgements in ERS. Other academic subjects, such as Biology and Geography, provide the background knowledge for understanding certain units in the ERS curriculum, such as Bioethics and Environmental Ethics.

Students pursuing studies in Social Services; Creative Studies or Business, Management and Law offered in Applied Learning courses may find the study of ERS valuable, as it helps students to understand not only religious practices and basic beliefs, but also the humanistic principles which lie behind rules of behaviour and codes of conduct. ERS also promotes mutual understanding and mutual respect, which are essential in the modern world.

### 3.3.6 Integrating learning with assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process. It provides a further opportunity for learning in addition to measuring achievement. The learning tasks in ERS curriculum can also be taken as assessment tasks, and provide information on how learning and teaching can be improved.

## 3.4 Managing the Curriculum

### 3.4.1 Areas of work

The curriculum leader of the subject should oversee the professional development of ERS teachers and the selection and use of appropriate learning and teaching resources. In managing the ERS curriculum in a school-based context, teachers should consider the following:

#### (a) Understanding the curriculum and learning context

- Understand the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2009) and this Guide with a view to adapting the central curriculum for school-based curriculum development;
- Understand the school's vision and mission, strengths and needs, as well as students' abilities and interests, and align them with the aims of the ERS curriculum; and
- Understand global religious trends, the community culture and the changing needs of society.

#### (b) Planning and implementing the curriculum

- Design and implement schemes of work to help students achieve the curriculum aims and learning objectives of the ERS curriculum; and
- Design modes of assessment and tasks to promote assessment for learning.

#### (c) Evaluating and improving the curriculum

- Evaluate continuously the ERS curriculum through collecting data from different sources and analysing evidence of student learning; and
- Review the curriculum in accordance with the learning and teaching context, student experiences, school provision etc. and make adjustments whenever necessary.

#### (d) Developing resources

- Develop, collect and organise learning and teaching resources. Make all learning supporting materials accessible to students whenever needed. Many of the resources which are currently used for Religious Studies (S4-5) and Ethics and Religious Studies (ASL) will continue to be suitable for supporting senior secondary ERS curriculum. For example, the *Curriculum Supporting Materials for ASL Ethics and Religious Studies* (CDC, 2001) can be easily adapted for most learning units of this curriculum;
- Make effective use of the resources in schools, religious organisations and the community to facilitate student learning ; and

- Expand learning and teaching resources by the use of information technology. Over time, teachers should build up a variety of resources in school, so that students can have access to sacred texts, reference books, religious artefacts, audio-visual resources, maps, posters, computer software and works produced by other students.

(For more ideas on learning and teaching resources, please refer to Chapter 6 “Learning and Teaching Resources”.)

(e) Building capacity

- Keep abreast of the latest curriculum development, teaching strategies and subject knowledge; and
- Build networks with other schools, conduct peer lesson observation, share effective practices and strategies with others to foster mutual support.

(f) Managing change and monitoring progress

- Undertake action research, teacher self-evaluation and periodical reviews of learning and teaching. These give teachers valuable data and provide evidence on which to base refinements and improvements to the ERS curriculum; and .
- Make reference to the latest global trends in ethics studies and religious education to adjust schemes of work.

### 3.4.2 Roles of different stakeholders

Principals, ERS panel chairpersons, ERS teachers and parents play different roles in the planning, development and implementation of the ERS curriculum. Collaboration is vital in developing and managing the curriculum.

(a) ERS teachers

- Keep abreast of the latest changes in curriculum, learning and teaching strategies and assessment practices;
- Contribute to ERS curriculum development, implementation and evaluation, and suggest strategies for learning, teaching and assessment;
- Stretch students’ potential in learning ERS, and encourage them to learn actively;
- Participate actively in professional development, peer collaboration and professional exchange; and
- Participate in educational research and projects so as to enhance learning and teaching.

(b) PSHE KLA Co-ordinators / ERS Panel Chairpersons

- Lead and plan ERS curriculum development, and set clear directions for it;
- Monitor the implementation of the curriculum, and make appropriate adjustments to strategies for learning and teaching and assessment to respond to students' needs;
- Facilitate professional development by encouraging panel members to participate in training courses and workshops;
- Hold regular meetings (both formal and informal) with panel members to strengthen coordination and communication among them;
- Promote professional exchange of subject knowledge and learning and teaching strategies; and
- Make the best use of resources available in school, religious organisations and the community.

(c) Principals

- Understand students' strengths and interests, as well as the significance of ethics and religious education;
- Take into consideration students' needs, school context and the central curriculum framework in formulating the curriculum, instructional and assessment policies;
- Coordinate the work of KLA leaders and subject panels, and set clear targets for curriculum development and curriculum management;
- Promote a culture of collaboration among teachers to facilitate the planning and implementation of the curriculum;
- Understand the strengths of teachers and deploy them flexibly and rationally;
- Convey a clear message to parents regarding the significance of ethics and religious education; and
- Build networks among schools, community sectors, and various religious organisations at management level to facilitate the development of the ERS curriculum.

(d) Parents

- Support the development of the ERS curriculum;
- Encourage their children to explore not only various beliefs and values, but their own thoughts and feelings about them; and
- Understand the value of ethics and religious education, and encourage and support their children to pursue their study of this curriculum.

## Chapter 4 Learning and Teaching

This chapter provides guidelines for effective learning and teaching of the Ethics and Religious Studies (ERS) curriculum. It is to be read in conjunction with **Booklet 3** of the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (CDC, 2009) which provides the basis for the suggestions set out below.

### 4.1 Knowledge and Learning

The senior secondary ERS curriculum aims to help students to develop their personal beliefs through exploring religious traditions, ethical issues and related human experiences. Personal beliefs, religious traditions and human experiences are the three main sources of knowledge for ERS.

Religious traditions encompass a coherent view and provide a distinctive interpretation of life and the world. The history of the development of religions, sacred texts, rituals and stories about religious people are the major areas from which students can acquire knowledge of the subject and develop a basic understanding of the particular religion they are studying. However, simply understanding the facts about a religion is insufficient to enable students to respond to the mysteries and challenges of life.

In the modern world, students encounter a variety of conflicting ideas and values, which prompt them to puzzle over the meaning and value of life, what is right and wrong and the sources of morality. Acquiring ethical knowledge and moral reasoning skills gives students the capacity to develop insights into human issues.

Such knowledge and skills can be drawn from major ethical systems, social norms and past human experience. However, the resources for developing knowledge and skills in ERS can be found not only outside but also within the school. Students and teachers bring their own personal beliefs, religious experiences and moral values into the classroom. These resources are immediately available and worth exploring.

#### 4.1.1 Constructing knowledge through concept development

Knowing depends upon understanding. ERS enables students to develop their understanding by encouraging them to acquire and use a range of concepts, values and attitudes, skills and knowledge. In ERS, students develop concepts, construct their knowledge and acquire thinking

skills by being required to make sense of experiences, information, events and occurrences. In order to bring this about teachers should:

- identify the concepts in a particular topic in the ERS curriculum;
- consider the values and attitudes which the learning experience will promote;
- decide if there are particular skills which students need to develop to help them assimilate the targeted concepts, values and attitudes; and
- select an appropriate issue or event which might help in the development of the concepts, values and attitudes, and skills that have been identified.

### **Facilitating students' acquisition of crucial ethical concepts through social issues**

Cloning has multiple meanings. It may refer to the production of two identical embryos by the splitting of a natural embryo with electric shock. This technique has been adopted by the rearing industry for many years. It may also refer to the cloning of an organism by means of nuclear transfer technology, a technological development which has aroused the whole world in recent years.

Cloning is discussed in great depths, and with different focuses, in the fields of biology, medicine, technology, law, etc. In ethics, the discussing of cloning should focus on its effect as an asexual reproduction method on human relationships, morality and society; rather than the details of nuclear transfer technology, the genetic recombination process, the working of the biological clock, etc.

In discussing with students a highly controversial social issue such as cloning in the realm of the ethics, the teacher helps them understand the focus and content of the controversies around cloning (especially the cloning of human beings), so that they may identify important concepts such as the definition of a human being, nature law, the limitations of life, value of life, human dignity, sacredness of life, right to live, reproductive rights, etc. Thus, students can understand the numerous supporting and opposing views to cloning, analyse the underlying rationale, assess their tenets and justifications, and consolidate and construct personal stance about the issue.

#### 4.1.2 Roles of learners and teachers

In addition to being transmitters of knowledge, teachers have a key role to play in facilitating learners' learning, developing their capacity for independent learning and building their confidence in searching for the meaning of life. To enable learners to assume greater ownership of their own learning and be more confident in making moral judgements, teachers are encouraged to: negotiate learning objectives and content with students; create a supportive and harmonious learning atmosphere; act as role models and leaders of learning; promote quality interaction in the classroom; provide appropriate scaffolding and quality feedback; and promote positive values and attitudes.

As students are relatively more mature at senior secondary level, they should be allowed a degree of autonomy in choosing what and how to learn. They should, therefore, be encouraged to set meaningful and realistic goals for their own learning, engage confidently and meaningfully in learning activities, reflect on their learning experiences, and monitor and evaluate the progress they are making against the set goals.

### 4.2 Guiding Principles

Outlined below are guiding principles for effective learning and teaching in ERS.

- **Building on strengths:** Hong Kong classroom demonstrates many positive features of Chinese students (such as the attribution of academic success to effort and the social nature of achievement motivation) and teachers (such as a strong emphasis on subject disciplines and moral responsibility). These strengths and uniqueness of local students and teachers should be acknowledged and treasured.
- **Prior knowledge and experience:** Learning activities should be planned with the prior knowledge and experience of students in mind. Teachers need to find out what students know at the beginning of the study of a module or an issue.
- **Understanding learning objectives:** Each learning activity should have clear learning objectives and students should be informed of them at the outset. Teacher should also be clear about the purpose of assignments and explain their significance to students.

- **Teaching for understanding:** The pedagogies chosen should aim at enabling students to act and think flexibly with what they know.
- **Promoting independent learning:** Generic skills and reflective thinking ability should be nurtured. The students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
- **Motivation:** Learning is best achieved when students are motivated. Motivation strategies should be used to arouse the interest of students.
- **Resources:** A wide range of teaching resources should be employed as tools for learning.
- **Engagement:** In conducting learning activities, it is important to engage the minds of students actively and to keep them “on task”.
- **Feedback and assessment:** Feedback and assessment should be used as an integral part of learning and teaching.
- **Catering for learner diversity:** As students bring a wide variety of experiences, needs, interests and aspirations to the learning process in ERS, teachers should employ a wide range of strategies to cater for student diversity. The diversity among students also provides opportunities for them to co-construct knowledge and share life experiences in a learning community and enrich each other’s learning.

## 4.3 Approaches and Strategies

### 4.3.1 From enquiry to reflection

This curriculum encourages teachers to adopt an enquiry approach to help students explore religious traditions, ethical issues and human experiences. However, at the end of their enquiry, students should also be motivated to develop their reflective thinking based on what they have learned. Most models of enquiry learning are cyclical and have three basic phases: exploring, understanding and expressing. This should be followed by a reflecting phase where students reflect upon learning experiences and the meanings embedded within them.



## **Exploring**

The basic criterion for the choice of a topic should be its worth as an area of exploration, i.e. whether it has the potential for achieving curriculum objectives and extending students' understanding. Exploring topics with a focus on people and their religious experiences provides students with a meaningful entry point to start their learning about religious beliefs.

### **How can exploring be a meaningful entry point for learning?**

To motivate students to learn and help them to identify what they are going to learn in ERS, teachers are encouraged to give students opportunities to understand human experiences in different aspects of life which take them beyond their own experiences to explore other people's perspectives. For example, they can:

- interview elderly people about their views on ageing and suffering;
- listen to different people's views on what religion brings to them;
- talk to someone who has experience of pilgrimage;
- conduct a survey among adults on the reasons for having religious beliefs, followed by a discussion of their views afterwards;
- participate in a debate about whether religion is necessary for a harmonious society; and
- discuss the pros and cons of ethical issues such as cloning and euthanasia.

## **Understanding**

Through various learning experiences such as data collection, discussion, case studies and interviews, students come to understand ideas and concepts and the complex relationships between them, which they can relate to content knowledge.

Understanding in ERS involves linking new ideas and knowledge to the existing experience of students. This includes making a direct linkage to previous experiences and learning. Teachers should be aware of activities in which students are currently engaged and help them to explore further the knowledge they have acquired.

### **How can teachers be certain that students have understood something?**

When students understand what they have learned and can construct meaning from it, teachers may find that they:

- challenge their previous knowledge and understanding;
- are willing to respond to the challenges of others;
- participate in a variety of formal and informal religious or ethical activities;
- take appropriate risks and learn from their “mistakes”;
- critically examine their own and others’ knowledge, actions and assumptions;
- achieve success and a sense of achievement in their learning;
- build new knowledge through linking it to what is already known;
- negotiate, make choices in, and take their share of responsibility for learning; and
- discuss the process of learning and teaching.

### **An interview with S6 students – linking Religious Studies to service learning**

A group of S6 students from SKH Kei Hau Secondary School organised the “Integrated Community Carnival” with physically disabled volunteers. They integrated their previous learning in Religion lessons with this service experience, and gained a deeper understanding of religious concepts. One of the students reflected, “We have applied Christian concepts in designing the game booth. I think that the teachings in the Bible, such as “The parable of the lost sheep” and “The parable of the good Samaritan”, gave us insights about helping disabled people.”

### **Expressing thoughts and beliefs**

In ERS, there is respect for the patterns of belief, feelings, thoughts and experiences of students, all of which are a potential source for learning. They become available for exploration and evaluation only when ample time and opportunity are given for their expression. Teachers are therefore encouraged to design activities which provide the maximum opportunity and freedom for students to express their ideas and responses. To encourage this, a classroom environment in which they are given support in articulating their thoughts and feelings is vital.

### **How to create a classroom climate which supports students' expression of their ideas**

To promote a supportive environment in which students feel confident in expressing their ideas, teachers should ensure that:

- the classroom climate emphasises care, support and quality relationships based on mutual respect for all involved in the learning and teaching process;
- the classroom environment values effort, provides achievable but challenging expectations, builds self-esteem and encourages students to become responsible and independent learners;
- the special needs and abilities of students are identified and active planning is undertaken to meet them;
- opportunities are provided for students to express their ideas based on an informed knowledge base;
- there is effective communication among all students;
- students are able to focus on learning; and
- skills are explicitly taught within relevant contexts.

### **Reflecting**

At the heart of ERS is the human need to formulate a set of beliefs and values. Reflection in this context involves evaluating in an honest and informed way the worth and relevance of beliefs and their accompanying values.

By reflecting on their learning experiences, students create personal meaning, develop and deepen empathy with others, and identify skills to be learned, valued and held for a lifetime. Subsequently, students try to implement their ideas and to test them against real-world experience, through which they develop the capacity to direct and assess their personal development for the rest of their lives.

### **How to organise reflective activities**

Reflective thinking skills enable students to make appropriate life choices. Acquiring these skills is one of the most important objectives in learning ERS. A variety of activities can be used to facilitate reflection. When planning such activities, teachers should note that:

- reflective activities should involve students and their peers, teachers and the people concerned; and
- different types of reflective activities are appropriate for different stages of learning.

Reflective activities can involve reading, writing, doing and telling. For example, teachers can:

- ask students to say what they got out of given details about a phenomenon , or ask questions such as “What do you think was the most important in what you have just learned?” or “If you had to summarise this case in two minutes, what would you say?”;
- assign case studies to help students think about what to expect from the study of particular topics;
- use journals to direct students to important issues and reinforce their learning experience by asking them to analyse how different ethical perspectives are presented and what moral values are embedded in a piece of writing;
- encourage discussion among students to introduce different perspectives and to challenge each other to think critically about the issues involved; and
- ask students to present what they have learned in terms of the major concepts related to their studies.

#### **4.3.2 Choosing appropriate learning and teaching strategies**

The pedagogy adopted by the teacher is crucial to the quality of learning and teaching ERS. In order to respond to the varied needs, interests, experiences and learning styles of students, teachers are encouraged to adopt a wide repertoire of pedagogical approaches to suit different learning and teaching contexts and purposes. It is true that teachers are also varied in their teaching styles, but it is necessary for them to try out other pedagogical approaches and extend their repertoire.

There are in general three major views of teaching:

**Teaching as direct instruction:** This view focuses on the teacher as the deliverer of the curriculum. The teacher transmits knowledge and tells learners what to do. Explanation, demonstration or modelling is adopted to enable learners to gain knowledge and understanding of a particular aspect of the subject.

**Teaching as enquiry:** This view places emphasis on the learners engaging in enquiry. The teacher gives learners a variety of tasks that ask them to search for and process information, and solve problems. In this enquiry, mutual support among learners is encouraged, so that all learners contribute to the construction of knowledge. In debating as well as activities in which learners are required to express their ideas, points of views and feelings, learners explore issues and practise their thinking skills.

**Teaching as co-construction:** This view focuses on the class as a community of learners. Learners contribute collectively to the creation of knowledge and criteria for assessment through discussion and group tasks. The approach encourages members of the class to negotiate areas of study with the teacher and then work collaboratively to conduct research and make presentations on topics that are of interest to them. In the process, the learners are encouraged to make contributions, propose their own standpoints, apply their learning skills and tap the rich sources of knowledge in the world.

These approaches do not need to be kept apart. They can be intertwined to complement each other. Teachers should try to vary the use of approaches to suit the learning context and to achieve optimal results. The table below identifies key aspects, strengths and limitations of the above views of teaching, and provides recommendations which teachers can refer to when arranging the learning and teaching activities for a specific topic.

Related pedagogies	Strengths	Limitations	Roles of teacher	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures</li> <li>• Didactic questioning</li> <li>• Explicit teaching and practice</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> <li>• Talk given by guest speakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conveys large amounts of information</li> <li>• Provides detailed information on concepts</li> <li>• Involves step-by-step instruction for skill acquisition</li> <li>• Provides maximum teacher control</li> <li>• Is easier to plan and use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasises listening only</li> <li>• Students tend to be passive recipients</li> <li>• Little feedback from students to teachers</li> <li>• Requires an effective speaker</li> <li>• Requires an attentive audience</li> <li>• Not very suitable for developing higher-order thinking</li> <li>• Not very suitable for complex materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is an instructor or a lecturer.</li> <li>• The teacher presents the information to be learned.</li> <li>• The teacher directs the learning process.</li> <li>• The teacher identifies lesson objectives and takes the primary responsibility for guiding the instruction.</li> <li>• The teacher is responsible for explaining and demonstrating.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Compulsory Part: Theory of Conduct</b> A lecture on the definition of the Act-utilitarianism and Rule-utilitarianism.</p> <p><b>Elective Part: Buddhism – Development of Buddhism in India</b> Invite a guest speaker to give a talk on his/her experience of yoga and explain the relationship between yoga and Buddhism.</p> <p><b>Elective Part: Christianity – History between the Two Testaments</b> A lecture on the measures and effects of Hellenization when Greece seized Palestine.</p>

**Figure 4.1**      *Teaching as Direct Instruction*

Related pedagogies	Strengths	Limitations	Roles of teacher	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflective discussion</li> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Debates</li> <li>• Report writing</li> <li>• Reflective journals</li> <li>• Worksheets</li> <li>• Surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pools ideas and experiences from a group</li> <li>• Is effective after a presentation, film or video show, or other learning experiences that need to be analysed</li> <li>• Allows everyone to participate actively in the process</li> <li>• Develops students' analytical and problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Allows students to apply new knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time-consuming</li> <li>• Outcomes can be unpredictable</li> <li>• Possibility of students not seeing the relevance to their own situations</li> <li>• More demanding on the skills and experience of the teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher is a facilitator, supporter and resource person.</li> <li>• The teacher is encouraged to use open-ended questions and to persuade students to give more explanation or elaboration of their answers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Compulsory Part: Business and Economics Ethics – Poverty</b> Ask students to investigate the ways in which religious organisations alleviate poverty, and evaluate their effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Elective Part: Buddhism – Buddhism in China</b> Ask students to collect pictures, photographs and articles on one of the following for conducting a case study so as to help them have a deeper understanding about the development of Buddhism in China:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Statues of Buddha;</li> <li>(ii) Costumes of Buddhist monks and nuns; or</li> <li>(iii) Buddhist architecture.</li> </ul> <p><b>Elective Part: Christianity – Temptation</b> Write a report on “The types of temptation which young people in Hong Kong face today”.</p>

**Figure 4.2**      *Teaching as Enquiry*

Related pedagogies	Strengths	Limitations	Roles of teacher	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group discussion</li> <li>• Role-play</li> <li>• Group projects</li> <li>• Experiential learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students share in planning and directing their learning.</li> <li>• Students can learn from peers and teachers and develop their social skills.</li> <li>• Individuals' thoughts can be shared in a group.</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for understanding the roles of others and thus appreciating their points of view.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavily dependent on the expertise of the teacher in structuring and developing the dynamics of the group.</li> <li>• Relies heavily on the observation, listening, interpersonal, and intervention skills of both the teacher and students.</li> <li>• Not appropriate for large groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teachers and students seek knowledge together.</li> <li>• The teachers have to provide a supportive and challenging environment for the exchange of ideas.</li> <li>• The teacher acts as a facilitator who helps to shape the learning paths through questioning or debriefing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Compulsory Part: Life and Death – Euthanasia</b> Organise a debate on the topic: “Euthanasia should be legalised in cases of incurable disease”.</p> <p><b>Elective Part: Buddhism – Life of the Buddha</b> Ask students to write a short play on “The life of Buddha”, selecting the most important events which highlight his compassion for living things, and his motives for leaving his family in search of ideals.</p> <p><b>Elective Part: Christianity – The Last Supper</b> Ask students to do a group project to investigate the meaning and influence of the Last Supper for non-Christians as well as Christians.</p>

*Figure 4.3 Teaching as Co-construction*



### 4.3.3 Experiential learning

Experiential learning is a student-oriented learning mode which enables learning by doing. In the process of experiential learning, students learn through a series of carefully designed activities. Students are encouraged to observe, think, analyse, synthesise, evaluate their experiences, and apply what they have learnt in their daily life.

#### **A meaningful learning journey**

Experiential learning plays an important role in the learning and teaching of this curriculum. It is a learning journey with an awareness of human needs, a concern for shared human experience and a willingness to identify with others. This involves awareness that one can act on one's environment to contribute to the welfare of other people.

#### **Students are the primary beneficiaries of experiential learning**

The Principal of SKH Kei Hau Secondary School expressed her feelings on experiential learning, “students engaged in experiential learning are called upon to move beyond their individual concerns and the perceived limits of their abilities to embrace the very things that make us human. To know that some people are in need, to know that one is capable of responding, to know that one's response will make a significant difference to individuals and the community – all these are powerful keys to human growth and meaningful learning.”

#### **Partnership in learning**

Instead of viewing students as passive recipients, experiential learning suggests that students are competent, intelligent and resourceful learners who are willing to contribute to their communities and society. When students take responsibility for their learning, the teacher takes on the role of mentor, guide and facilitator. In experiential learning, teachers are no longer instructors, since it is the students who direct their own experiential learning and determine what meaning to derive from it.

Experiential learning allows the development of a good partnership between students and teacher. As “learning by doing” is the central tenet of this strategy, there are opportunities for teachers and students to learn together and from each other. This fosters good teacher-student relationships. By giving students a sense of responsibility in their own learning, they can become self-directed learners.

### **Quality relationships with students**

A RS teacher of SKH Kei Hau Secondary School evaluated the impact of experiential learning on student-teacher relationship, “an environment is created in which students can learn from emotionally rich experiences. As partnerships between teachers and students are developed, some students may show increased respect for teachers and increased comfort in working with them.”

### **Debriefing and reflection**

Experience itself is the essence of experiential learning. Learning results from students’ interpretations of their experiences. Teachers must provide debriefing and reflection to students to generalise meaning to learning experience and establish positive values.

In debriefing, teachers encourage students to rethink and reconstruct their learning experiences in order to make sense of them, so that they will be able to apply what they have learnt to new situations. Reflection can be carried out through various activities such as peer sharing, group discussion or writing reflective journals. The more students see their learning as personally meaningful and significant, the more they will learn.

### **Suitable timing for debriefing and reflection**

Ethics and Religious Studies requires and encourages a life themes approach which involves students in reflecting on the meaning of life.

A debriefing should be organised for students immediately after they have taken part in an activity when they have much to share. Their fresh memories of the experience facilitate reflection and the identification of new knowledge and skills. The teacher can consolidate students learning by evaluating the learning programme with them immediately afterwards. The teacher can also help them to analyse their learning experience in various respects, to avoid students focusing merely on certain successful or negative aspects.

After group sharing, students should be given sufficient time and personal space to write their own individual reflective journals.

Teachers can prepare for the reflection session by developing questions beforehand. However, these questions should be viewed simply as tools for starting a meaningful discussion, which should be modified when the situation changes.

#### **Suggested ways of stimulating reflection**

- Review the details of events: who, what and where?
- Review the planning: what could have been done better?
- What was learned? Make a list.
- What went well/wrong? What could be improved?
- How were responsibilities handled?
- Recapture some intense feelings such as anger, joy, worry, satisfaction, etc.
- What were the key findings?

#### 4.3.4 Reading to learn

To develop the habit of reading independently is one of the goals of the school curriculum. “Reading to learn” is also one of the four key tasks recommended by the CDC (2001) to help students develop independent learning capabilities.

The skills involved in “Reading to learn” enhance students’ overall capacity for lifelong learning and whole-person development. More specifically, they are important in ERS in the following ways:

- They enable students to develop their reflective thinking skills through understanding and constructing meaning from what they read.
- They cultivate an openness of mind towards different religious beliefs, ideas, values and cultures.
- They enrich students’ knowledge and broaden their understanding of life which helps them to face life challenges.

The effective implementation of “Reading to learn” in a school requires a concerted effort by the school head, curriculum leaders, the teacher-librarians and teachers of different subject panels. A suggested reading list for teachers and students can be found in **References**. (pp. 103-118)

## 4.4 Learning Community

Teachers and students are encouraged to work closely together as a learning community which is characterised by mutual trust. A learning community fosters active over passive learning, cooperation over competition and team spirit over isolation. In a learning community, students are conducive to increasing learners' involvement and motivation. Learners are supported to become increasingly capable of taking responsibility for the choices they make, the actions they pursue and the consequences they encounter. They are encouraged to converse with each other and to examine the meanings they have derived from their learning experiences. In a learning community, students develop their capacity to be responsible for their own learning and learn to care about the learning of their peers.

Apart from promoting partnership among students in learning, an effective learning community also involves a close partnership between teachers and students. In addition to being a manager of class activities and a transmitter of knowledge, in a learning community, the teacher works closely together with the students, forming a mentoring relationship with them.

## 4.5 Catering for Learning Differences

Able students who show willingness and capacity for ethical and spiritual development require the teachers to adopt particular learning and teaching strategies. Such learners bring with them a wide variety of needs, hopes and aspirations to their learning process. In order to help them to fulfil their potential, teachers are encouraged to:

- use a variety of challenging questioning strategies to stimulate them to explore religious questions and ethical phenomena;
- set extension tasks that promote greater depth of understanding or reflection;
- direct the focus of learning to the application of ideas and learning in new or unfamiliar contexts;
- build up resources for extended reading in each topic of the curriculum;
- structure groups to enable the most able students to work together at the highest levels on suitable occasions; and
- provide opportunities for students to make connections between their learning in ERS and other subjects.

In designing learning and teaching activities for students who need extra assistance to overcome some barriers in learning, teachers may consider:

- choosing content knowledge from contexts which students are familiar with;
- giving students opportunities to revisit knowledge and skills learned in different contexts;
- providing short, guided and more focused tasks, with support, when introducing new knowledge;
- allowing students to draw examples mainly from their own religious experiences and understanding;
- providing a variety of learning environments for the delivery of content; and
- employing a wide range of teaching approaches to meet their needs.

## Chapter 5 Assessment

This chapter discusses the role of assessment in learning and teaching Ethics and Religious Studies (ERS), the principles that should guide assessment of the subject and the need for both formative and summative assessment. It also provides guidance on internal assessment and details of the public assessment of ERS. Finally, information is given on how standards are established and maintained and how results are reported with reference to these standards. General guidance on assessment can be found in the *Senior Secondary Curriculum Guide* (SSCG) (CDC, 2009).

### 5.1 The Roles of Assessment

Assessment is the practice of collecting evidence of student learning. It is a vital and integral part of classroom instruction, and serves several purposes and audiences.

First and foremost, it gives feedback to students, teachers, schools and parents on the effectiveness of teaching and on students' strengths and weaknesses in learning.

Secondly, it provides information to schools, school systems, government, tertiary institutions and employers to enable them to monitor standards and to facilitate selection decisions.

The most important role of assessment is in promoting learning and monitoring students' progress. However, in the senior secondary years, the more public roles of assessment for certification and selection come to the fore. Inevitably, these imply high-stakes uses of assessment since the results are typically employed to make critical decisions about individuals that affect their future.

The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) provides a common end-of-school credential that gives access to university study, work, and further education and training. It summarises student performance in the four core subjects and in various elective subjects, including both discipline-oriented subjects and the new Applied Learning courses. It needs to be interpreted in conjunction with other information about students given in the Student Learning Profile.

## 5.2 Formative and Summative Assessment

It is useful to distinguish between the two main purposes of assessment, namely “assessment *for* learning” (formative assessment) and “assessment *of* learning” (summative assessment).

“Assessment *for* learning” is concerned with obtaining feedback on learning and teaching, and utilising this to make learning more effective and to introduce any necessary changes to teaching strategies. We refer to this kind of assessment as “formative assessment” because it is all about forming or shaping learning and teaching. Formative assessment should take place on a daily basis and typically involves close attention to small “chunks” of learning.

“Assessment *of* learning” is concerned with determining progress in learning, and is referred to as “summative” assessment, because it is all about summarising how much learning has taken place. Summative assessment is normally undertaken at the conclusion of a significant period of instruction (e.g. at the end of the year, or of a key stage of schooling) and reviews much larger “chunks” of learning.

In practice, a sharp distinction cannot always be made between formative and summative assessment, because the same assessment can in some circumstances serve both formative and summative purposes. Teachers can refer to the SSCG for further discussion of formative and summative assessment.

Formative assessment should be distinguished from continuous assessment. The former refers to the provision of feedback to improve learning and teaching based on formal or informal assessment of student performance, while the latter refers to the assessment of students’ ongoing work and may involve no provision of feedback that helps to promote better learning and teaching. For example, accumulating results in class tests carried out on a weekly basis, without giving students constructive feedback, may neither be effective formative assessment nor meaningful summative assessment.

There are good educational reasons why formative assessment should be given more attention and accorded a higher status than summative assessment, on which schools tended to place a greater emphasis in the past. There is research evidence that indicates that formative assessment can be beneficial when used for refining instructional decision-making in teaching and generating feedback to improve learning. For this reason, the CDC report *Learning to Learn – The Way Forward in Curriculum Development* (CDC, 2001) recommended that there should be a change in assessment practices, with schools placing due emphasis on formative assessment to make assessment *for* learning an integral part of classroom teaching.

Another distinction to be made is between internal assessment and public assessment. Internal assessment refers to the assessment practices that teachers and schools employ as part of the ongoing learning and teaching process during the three years of senior secondary studies. In contrast, public assessment refers to the assessment conducted as part of the assessment process in place for all schools. Within the context of the HKDSE, this means the public examinations conducted by the HKEAA. On balance, internal assessment should be more formative, whereas public assessment tends to be more summative. Nevertheless, this need not be seen as a simple dichotomy.

### 5.3 Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives listed below are closely aligned with the curriculum framework and the broad learning outcomes presented in earlier chapters.

#### **Compulsory Part: Ethics**

##### **Module 1: Normative Ethics**

After studying the topics, students should be able to:

1. understand basic theories in ethics, and apply such theories to analyse ethical problems in a pluralistic society;
2. identify and assess critically the arguments of different ethical theories;
3. make ethical judgements with reference to various ethical principles and methods of reasoning to express personal standpoints;
4. set priorities among various conflicting values and virtues when needed;
5. uphold an open and tolerant approach when dealing with different ethical issues related to daily-life experience; and
6. demonstrate a rational and coherent thinking style when discussing ethical questions.

##### **Module 2: Personal and Social Issues**

After studying the topics, students should be able to:

1. recognise the complexity of making moral decisions;
2. understand the relationship between ethical issues and values (e.g. commitment, responsibility, etc.), and apply them to solve personal and social problems;
3. identify ethical problems involved in personal and social issues;
4. analyse ethical issues by applying various theories;



5. understand the ethical standpoints of different religions and individuals; and
6. discuss ethical issues rationally, and make moral decisions with a reasonable and responsible attitude.

## **Elective Part I: Religious Traditions**

### **Module 1: Buddhism**

After studying the topics, students should be able to:

1. show knowledge of Buddha's life and the basic doctrines of Buddhism;
2. recognise the related Indian cultural context of Buddhism at its beginning;
3. understand how Buddhism developed after Buddha's death and describe briefly the development of Buddhism in China and its impact on Chinese culture;
4. apply Buddhist teachings to deal with problems of life and daily-life situations;
5. respond to contemporary social problems through applying Buddhist ethics and values; and
6. understand the Buddhist spirit of compassion, and care for other sentient beings.

### **Module 2: Christianity**

After studying the topics, students should be able to:

1. understand the Old Testament concepts embedded in Christian faith and how God's promises were fulfilled in Christ;
2. understand the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and the essence of the Christian faith;
3. understand the development of the Early Church and its implications for the Church today; and recognise the influence of the teachings of apostles such as Paul, James and John in the development of the Christian faith;
4. respond to social issues with Christian ethical teachings and values;

5. show understanding of the needs of others and demonstrate how Jesus Christ's love can help them; and
6. adopt a positive attitude towards life and the world.

## **Elective Part II: Faiths in Action**

### **Module 1: Learning to serve and serving to learn**

After the service learning, students should be able to:

1. acknowledge the needs, feelings and expectation of others;
2. apply knowledge gained in ERS in life experiences and other service experiences; and
3. demonstrate meaningful reflection on experiences from services and apply such experiences in daily life.

### **Module 2: Learning from religious practices**

After experiencing the religious rituals, students should be able to:

1. show some understanding of the religion which they have just experienced through its rituals and practices;
2. recognise the diversity in religions and cultures; and
3. adopt a positive attitude towards people from different religions and respect for their beliefs.

The majority of the above assessment objectives are applicable to both internal and public assessment, while some may not be applicable to public assessment. Those objectives applicable to public assessment are listed in the Regulations and Assessment Frameworks published by the HKEAA.

## 5.4 Internal Assessment

This section presents the guiding principles that can be used as the basis for designing internal assessment and some common assessment practices for ERS for use in schools. Some of these principles are common to both internal and public assessment.

### 5.4.1 Guiding principles

Internal assessment practices should be aligned with curriculum planning, teaching progression, student abilities and the school contexts. The information collected will help to motivate, promote and monitor student learning, and will also help teachers to find ways of promoting more effective learning and teaching.

#### (a) Alignment with the learning objectives

A wide range of assessment practices should be used to assess the achievement of different learning objectives for whole-person development. The weighting given to different areas in assessment should be discussed and agreed among teachers. The assessment purposes and criteria should also be discussed and agreed, and then made known to students so that they have a full understanding of the learning expected of them.

#### (b) Catering for the range of student ability

Assessment practices at different levels of difficulty and in diverse modes should be used to cater for students with different aptitudes and abilities. This helps to ensure that the more able students are challenged to develop their full potential and that the less able ones are encouraged to sustain their interest and sense of success in learning.

#### (c) Tracking progress over time

As internal assessment should not be a one-off exercise, schools are encouraged to use practices that can track learning progress over time (e.g. portfolios). Assessment practices of this kind allow students to set their own incremental targets and manage their own pace of learning, which will have a positive impact on their commitment to learning.

#### (d) Timely and encouraging feedback

Teachers should provide timely and encouraging feedback through a variety of means, such as constructive verbal comments during classroom activities and written remarks on assignments

with an indication of where improvements can be made. Such feedback helps students sustain their momentum in learning, and to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

(e) Making reference to the school's context

As learning is more meaningful when the content or process is linked to a setting which is familiar to students, schools are encouraged to design some assessment tasks that make reference to the school's own context (e.g. its location, relationship with the community, and mission).

(f) Making reference to current progress in student learning

Internal assessment tasks should be designed with reference to students' current knowledge, as this helps maintain the students' commitment to learning.

(g) Feedback from peers and from the students themselves

In addition to giving feedback, teachers should also provide opportunities for peer assessment and self-assessment in student learning. The former enables students to learn among themselves, and the latter promotes reflective thinking which is vital for students' lifelong learning.

(h) Appropriate use of assessment information to provide feedback

Internal assessment provides a rich source of data for providing evidence-based feedback on learning in a formative manner.

#### 5.4.2 Internal assessment practices

A range of assessment practices suited to ERS, such as open book tests, oral questioning, projects, and fieldwork should be used to promote the attainment of the various learning outcomes. However, teachers should note that these practices should be an integral part of learning and teaching, not "add-on" activities .

#### **Open book tests**

Open book tests are suitable for this subject as it is based on a wide range of religious texts. Students are allowed access to the source materials during the tests, so that they do not need to memorise the texts. Questions for this type of test should aim to stimulate the use of reference materials and help students to organise their ideas.

### **Oral questioning**

Oral questioning with feedback need not be seen as a test of spoken language only – it can be helpful for assessment in other subjects also. It is a flexible approach which allows teachers to discuss matters in depth with able students, to tease out the meaning of obscure statements, and to find out reasons for conclusions. Teachers are encouraged to try using oral assessment as it can be a valuable supplement to conventional assessment methods.

### **Projects**

A project is any piece of extended work from which the constraints of lesson time have been largely removed. Asking students to carry out project work provides them with an opportunity to study a topic of interest in depth, and teachers may encourage students to:

- Clarifying the areas of interest
- Establishing a framework for enquiry
- Selecting resource materials
- Organise data
- Presenting findings.

### **Fieldwork**

Fieldwork in ERS involves serving people in need and participating in religious rituals, and its specific objectives range from collecting information to reflecting on personal experience. It calls for keen observation, mastery of concepts and skills, and accurate recording. Fieldwork can often contribute significantly to establishing good relations between the school and the community. Also, the results of fieldwork can be very rewarding for students, both in learning the subject-matter and in enhancing their social, moral and spiritual development.

### Faiths in Action

Faiths in Action in this subject may be materialized by participating in voluntary service or religious practices. Related assignments may include projects, fieldwork, learning portfolio, compilation of data file, proposals, various media production, etc. Teachers should design learning materials and activities flexibly according to students' needs and abilities. The table below shows some stages that may be involved in a Faiths in Action learning activity.

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Related activities</b>
1	Identification of the aims of the project	Through discussion with the teachers, students identify possible themes to be explored.
2	Data collection	Students search for information about the specific organisations/religious groups/rituals and formulate a preliminary proposal for the activity.
3	Preparation	Development of an action plan; identification of personal expectations of the activity; receiving the necessary training and rehearsing the action plan. Students may submit proposals for the activities.
4	Implementation –experiencing	Execution of the action plan; personal involvement in the activity.
5	Follow-up	Summarising the experience; getting feedback; reflection based on the experience gained; seeking further learning opportunities and exploration of the possible impact on personal morality, spirituality and relationship with others; followed by oral reporting and discussion in class.
6	Reporting	Teachers may require students to submit written reports on the activities covering the tasks in stages 4–5 with an emphasis on personal accounts and reflection based on relevant ethical/religious concepts and theories.

## 5.5 Public Assessment

### 5.5.1 Guiding principles

The principles guiding public assessment are outlined below for teachers' reference.

#### (a) Alignment with the curriculum

The outcomes that are assessed and examined through the HKDSE should be aligned with the aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes of the senior secondary curriculum. To enhance the validity of public assessment, the assessment procedures should address the range of valued learning outcomes.

The public assessment for ERS is a written examination to test students' mastery of the expected learning outcomes. The written examinations involve various questions types that can assess different learning outcomes.

#### (b) Fairness, objectivity and reliability

Students should be assessed in ways that are fair and are not biased against particular groups of students. A characteristic of fair assessment is that it is objective and under the control of an independent examining authority that is impartial and open to public scrutiny. Fairness also implies that assessments provide a reliable measure of each student's performance in a given subject so that, if they were to be repeated, very similar results would be obtained.

#### (c) Inclusiveness

The assessments and examinations in the HKDSE need to accommodate the full spectrum of student aptitude and ability.

The written examination for ERS includes different types of questions to cover the spectrum of ability, so that all students will be able to demonstrate their achievements.

#### (d) Standards-referencing

The reporting system is "standards-referenced", i.e. student performance is matched against standards, which indicate what students have to know and be able to do to merit a certain level of performance.

(e) Informativeness

The HKDSE qualification and the associated assessment and examinations system provide useful information to all parties. First, it provides feedback to students on their performance and to teachers and schools on the quality of the teaching provided. Second, it communicates to parents, tertiary institutions, employers and the public at large what students know and are able to do, in terms of how their performance matches the standards. Third, it facilitates selection decisions that are fair and defensible.

### 5.5.2 Assessment design

The table below shows the assessment design of the subject with effect from the 2016 HKDSE Examination. The assessment design is subject to continual refinement in the light of feedback from live examinations. Full details are provided in the Regulations and Assessment Frameworks for the year of the examination and other supplementary documents, which are available on the HKEAA website

([www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment\\_framework/](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/hkdse/assessment/assessment_framework/)). The table below shows the outline of the assessment design of Ethics and Religious Studies.

Component		Weighting	Duration
Public Examination	Paper 1: Ethics	50%	1 hour 45 minutes
	Paper 2: Religious Traditions	50%	1 hour 45 minutes

**Table 5.1** *The assessment design of Ethics and Religious Studies in HKDSE*

### 5.5.3 Public examinations

The written examination covers the learning outcomes and provides a variety of questions at different levels of difficulty. It incorporates various question types, such as:

1. Short questions that aim at assessing basic understanding of related concepts and theories.

Students may be required, for instance, to illustrate certain concepts with examples, provide simple solutions to non-complex theoretical disputes, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of certain theories, and apply theories appropriately to simple situations, etc.
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2. Guided essay questions that allow students to handle problems using a step-by-step approach.

Students may be required to integrate, refer to and/or apply their answers in different parts of a question.

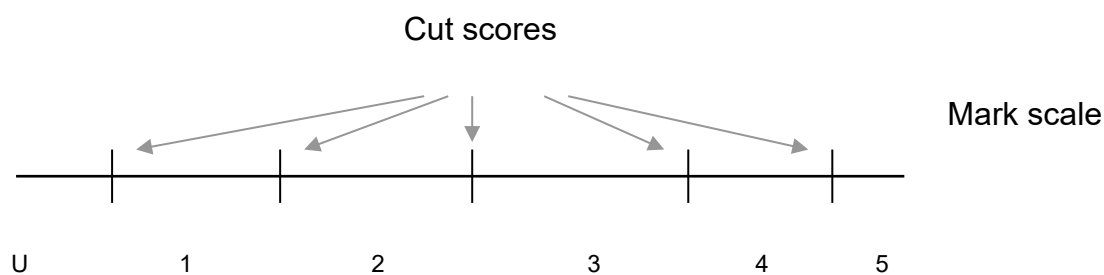
3. Essay questions that focus on assessment of students' higher-order thinking skills.

Students may be required to provide critical analysis, evaluation and meaningful discussion on some relatively complicated issues, usually adapted from real-life experience.

Schools may refer to the live examination papers regarding the format of the examination and the standards at which the questions are pitched.

#### 5.5.4 Standards and the reporting of results

Standards-referenced reporting is adopted for the HKDSE. What this means is that candidates' levels of performance are reported with reference to a set of standards as defined by cut scores on the mark scale for a given subject. Standards referencing relates to the way in which results are reported and does not involve any changes in how teachers or examiners mark student work. The set of standards for a given subject can be represented diagrammatically as shown in Figure 5.1.



**Figure 5.1** *Defining levels of performance via cut scores on the mark scale for a given subject*

Within the context of the HKDSE there are five cut scores, which are used to distinguish five levels of performance (1–5), with 5 being the highest. A performance below the cut score for Level 1 is labelled as “Unclassified” (U).

For each of the five levels, a set of written descriptors has been developed to describe what the typical candidate performing at this level is able to do. The principle behind these descriptors

is that they describe what typical candidates *can* do, not what they *cannot* do. In other words, they describe performance in positive rather than negative terms. These descriptors represent “on-average” statements and may not apply precisely to individuals, whose performance within a subject may be variable and span two or more levels. Samples of students’ work at various levels of attainment are provided to illustrate the standards expected of them. These samples, when used together with the level descriptors, will illustrate the standards expected at the various levels of attainment.

In setting standards for the HKDSE, Levels 4 and 5 are set with reference to the standards achieved by students awarded grades A–D in the HKALE. It needs to be stressed, however, that the intention is that the standards will remain constant over time – not the percentages awarded different levels, as these are free to vary in line with variations in overall student performance. Referencing Levels 4 and 5 to the standards associated with the old grades A–D is important for ensuring a degree of continuity with past practice, for facilitating tertiary selection and for maintaining international recognition.

To provide finer discrimination for selection purposes, the Level 5 candidates with the best performance have their results annotated with the symbols \*\* and the next top group with the symbol \*. The HKDSE certificate itself records the Level awarded to each candidate.

## Chapter 6 Learning and Teaching Resources

This chapter discusses the importance of selecting and making effective use of learning and teaching resources, including textbooks, to enhance student learning. Schools need to select, adapt and, where appropriate, develop the relevant resources to support student learning.

### 6.1 Function of Learning and Teaching Resources

The function of learning and teaching resources is to provide a basis for learning experiences for students. Learning resources include not only textbooks, workbooks and audio-visual teaching aids produced by the Education and Manpower Bureau or other organisations but also web-based learning materials, computer software, the Internet, the media, libraries, resources in the natural environment, and people. All of these should be drawn upon to help students to broaden their learning experiences and meet their different learning needs. If used effectively, they will help them to: consolidate what they have learned; extend and construct knowledge; develop the learning strategies and generic skills they need; and reflect on their values and attitudes – and thus lay a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

In ERS, learning and teaching resources are important for concept building and value clarification in two ways. First, they provide relevant background information and basic knowledge of religious and ethical issues in different contexts. They can supplement students' school-based learning experiences and be the basis for further enquiry and discussion, but it should be ensured that they would not become straitjackets on the direction, scope and depth of learning and teaching.

Second, they can serve to bring out different values, interests, views, opinions and controversies on evolving issues. The provision of materials from a wide range of sources will help students to become aware of and appreciate the diversity in different cultures and the pluralistic nature of society.

There is no need for the teachers to choose or develop all the learning and teaching resources. Students should also be encouraged to identify, propose and select resources to complement the teacher's selection. Their choices may bring in different perspectives, given their varied socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

Learning and teaching resources should not be treated simply as collections of information and facts to be memorised. They should become objects for critical analysis and evaluation, as they are derived from their different ideological backgrounds, views and values, and therefore may exhibit the authors' biases.

## 6.2 Guiding Principles

The following are some basic considerations in the selection of learning and teaching resources:

- They should be in line with the curriculum aims and contain core elements of the curriculum.
- They should arouse students' interest, motivate them to engage actively in learning tasks and promote higher-order thinking.
- The choice of materials should take into account students' prior knowledge and experiences; and they should provide access to knowledge, as well as scaffolding, to help students progress in their learning.
- They should cater for students' individual differences by providing a variety of learning activities at different levels of difficulty.
- The language used should be of a good standard and at a suitable level of difficulty to encourage independent reading and the construction of meaning by learners.
- They should present information and ideas accurately and effectively.
- They should promote independent learning by complementing and extending what students have learned in class.
- They should promote discussion and further enquiry.
- They should foster positive values and attitudes.
- They should be affordable in terms of cost and the time and effort required to prepare or acquire them.

## 6.3 Commonly Used Resources

### 6.3.1 Textbooks

Textbooks are one of many tools to bring about learning, but they should not be regarded as the curriculum itself. Teachers should exercise their professional judgement in choosing high quality textbooks which allow students to achieve the learning objectives of the curriculum.

Teachers are expected to select relevant textbook materials which cover at least the basic elements, and then decide on the use of supplementary resources to support student learning. In both cases, they should meet students' varied needs and abilities.

Noted below are some tools developed by the EMB to help in the selection of textbooks and other learning and teaching resources.

- *Recommended Textbook List*
- *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks*
- *Notes on Selection of Textbooks and Learning Materials for Use in Schools*

(<http://www.emb.gov.hk/>; then > Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary Education > Curriculum Development > Textbook Information)

### **Suggested checklist for ERS textbook selection**

#### 1. Content and presentation

- Is the textbook part of a series, and if so, would using the entire series be appropriate?
- Does the textbook suit the interests and ability of students and background of school?
- Does the textbook have a helpful layout, design, and organisation?
- Is the textbook sensitive to the religious and cultural background and interests of the students?
- Is the writing style interesting and engaging, while also applying the specific concepts, language and terminology of Ethics and Religious Studies?
- Does the suggested instructional sequence take into account the prior knowledge and experience of students in my school?

#### 2. Skills

- Are the skills promoted in the textbook appropriate for the learners?
- Does the textbook provide learners with adequate guidance to acquire these skills?
- Do the skills presented in the textbook include a wide range of cognitive skills to challenge students to think?

#### 3. Exercises and activities

- Do the exercises and activities in the textbook fit the needs of students in my school?
- Do the exercises and activities reinforce what students have already learned and involve progression from the more simple to the more complex?
- Are the exercises and activities varied in format so that they will motivate and challenge learners?

#### 4. Organisation and format

- Teacher materials:
  - Do the background materials provide sufficient content-focused information for the study of Ethics and Religious Studies?
  - Do they provide sufficient information and strategies for students of varied ability?
  - Are the directions for conducting and presenting lessons, experiential learning activities and other explorations clear and easy to follow?
- Student materials:
  - Are the print materials for the students well written, logical and compelling in content?
  - Is the overall readability level of the materials appropriate for learners in my school?

### 6.3.2 Reference materials

The following resources – reference books, journals, policy papers, speeches, reports and documents, surveys, book reviews, newspaper clippings, maps, pictures, cartoons, drawings and slogans – are powerful tools for bringing authentic ethics and religious concerns and problems into the classroom. They can help students see the relevance of what they are learning, and help them achieve a wider understanding of issues.

### 6.3.3 Curriculum Support Materials by Curriculum Development Institute, EDB

To facilitate implementation of the NSS curriculum, The Curriculum Development Institute has compiled a series of Curriculum Support Materials. These materials were disseminated through teacher training workshops and are uploaded for teachers' reference in EDB One Stop Portal and the website of Ethics and Religious Studies under Personal, Social and Humanities Education Key Learning Area. Below are the links:

EDB One Stop Portal:

<http://www.hkedcity.net/edbosp/>

ERS, PSHE website:

<http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/references-and-resources/ethics-and-religious-studies/index.html>

([Home](#) > [Curriculum Development](#) > [Key Learning Areas](#) > [Personal, Social & Humanities Education](#) > [References and Resources](#) > [Ethics & Religious Studies](#))

Teachers are reminded to make adaptive use of the materials according to the needs of their students.

#### 6.3.4 Technology and web-based resources

The massive increase in the quantity of information available on the Internet has led to the adoption of new approaches to learning and teaching. Teachers can act as facilitators of learning by helping students search for information and work on it in order to turn it into personal knowledge. The strategic use of information technology (IT), with appropriate guidance, enhances student engagement, increases the amount of information that can be accessed and makes learning more convenient.

Technologies help the learning of ERS by:

- providing audio-visual aids for understanding difficult concepts;
- providing access to large quantities of information from a wide variety of sources;
- allowing students to work at their own pace, and enabling the use of specially designed software;
- supporting interaction between the learners, resources and teachers, and collaboration between learners and teachers; and
- facilitating the acquisition of information, the development of critical thinking and knowledge-building.

The use of IT in ERS provides an instant, global platform for the exchange of different ethical and religious values, views and opinions. The interaction and discussion generated are no longer confined to any locality or religious group. Exposure to a multiplicity of beliefs and perceptions is highly beneficial for the learning and teaching of the subject.

The information gathered through IT should, however, be treated with care. Teachers and students need to be aware that information on websites, chat groups, web journals (“blogs”) etc. may be culturally or religiously biased, partial or even false. The validity and reliability of any claims should be checked and substantiated by using other sources of information and evidence.

#### 6.3.5 Mass media

As with IT, the media are a very important source of information and a stimulus for teachers and students engaging in the enquiry process. In many respects, the media are also instant and global, and they articulate different ethical and religious traditions, values and opinions which

are very valuable for studying ERS. Non-textual materials from the media can help to increase the motivation and learning effectiveness of students with different learning styles.

Again, it has to be pointed out that the messages embedded in information provided by the mass media need to be carefully decoded. Students should be guided to take into account the possible bias of media organisations when judging the accuracy of the information presented. The information provided should never be treated as facts per se.

### 6.3.6 Community resources

A spirit of partnership is necessary among the many parties who contribute in different ways to helping our students learn effectively.

#### **Religious and social organisations**

The richness of the religious traditions in our society provides many opportunities for authentic learning outside the classroom. There are numerous religious, cultural and social organisations such as theological seminaries, Sangha colleges and scholarly societies which can provide relevant resources for the ERS curriculum. They are particularly helpful in providing experiential learning activities. Visiting places of worship such as cathedrals, churches, temples, mosques and synagogues, celebrating religious festivals and observing religious rituals or ceremonies are all valuable experiences which give teachers and students insights into different religious beliefs and practices.

#### **The family and neighbours**

Grandparents, parents, family members, other relatives and neighbours can provide valuable resources to support the learning and teaching of this curriculum. Their diversity in ethical views, religious standpoints and personal convictions can contribute to widening students' horizons and enhancing their religious sensitivity.

#### **Religious leaders and believers**

Religious leaders and believers can be promising sources of support for the learning and teaching of ERS. Religious leaders such as priests, monks and vicars can often be seen on the TV news or religious programmes; and they can be reached easily in cathedrals, churches and temples on special days. Schools can solicit their help by inviting them to share religious insights, deliver talks and meet with students. Interviewing or visiting religious leaders and believers can provide students with valuable information and learning experiences.



## 6.4 Flexible Use of Learning and Teaching Resources

### 6.4.1 Fitness for purpose

The resources used should be fit for purpose. For example, in designing a role-play, background information on the parties involved and the selected scenario should be provided. Such information may be given to students in the form of newspaper clippings, video clips or role-specification sheets written by the teacher. Good reading materials should be made available to students to promote “Reading to learn”; and in organising life-wide learning activities, suitable community resources such as museums and non-government organisations should be explored.

### 6.4.2 Catering for learner diversity

The resources selected should meet the varied needs and learning styles of students, for instance, some students may respond well to textual information, others to visual representation, and yet others to resources in other formats. Using a variety of types of resources can help to develop different cognitive faculties.

## 6.5 Resource Management

A spirit of partnership is necessary for resource and knowledge management. Schools should make arrangements for:

- teachers and students to share learning and teaching resources through the Intranet or other means within the school; and
- teachers to evaluate on the resources used, and form professional groups for the exchange of experience.

A regularly updated resource bank covering the curriculum of ERS is a very important tool for effective learning and teaching. It has to be built up and maintained by the joint effort of teachers. It should also involve students, who can suggest good resources that they have found. Students’ good work (especially their experiential learning portfolios) can also be a valuable resource for other students.

## Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies (Senior Secondary)

(From October 2003 to August 2015)

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Mr WOO Wai-ki	(until December 2010)
	Mr YIM Chi-shing	(from December 2010)
<b>Members:</b>	Dr CHAN Shun-hing	
	Ms CHAN So-wan, Teresa	(until March 2009)
	Ms FAN Ho-yan, Phoebe	(from March 2009 to Aug 2013)
	Mr HO Chi-yin	(from March 2009)
	Sr KWOK Ming-ying, Anita	(from March 2009)
	Dr KUNG Lap-yan	
	Mr LAM Yiu-wing	(until Aug 2013)
	Ms LAU Man-wah	(from March 2009 to Aug 2013)
	Ms LAU Ngar-sze	(until March 2009)
	Ms LEUNG Chui-yan, Janny	(from March 2009 to Aug 2013)
	Dr LIU Ming-wood	(until March 2009)
	Ms LOK Wai-ling	(until Aug 2013)
	Ms NG Yik-man	(until March 2009)
	Dr NG Yau-nang	(from March 2009 to Aug 2013)
	Dr WONG Kun-chun, Eric	(until Aug 2013)
	Mr YIP Cheong-man	(until March 2009)

<b>Co-opted Members:</b>	Rev KOK Kwong	(until Aug 2013)
	The Rev Mrs Jenny NAM	(until March 2009)
	SR Margaret WONG	(until March 2009)
<b>Ex-officio Members:</b>	Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith	(from Dec 2014)
	Mr WOO Chun-kit, Keith (EDB)	(from August 2012 to Dec 2014)
	Mr LUI Mo-dock (EDB)	(from September 2006 to August 2012)
	Mr WONG Ho-chiu (EDB)	(until August 2006)
	Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)	
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mr YIP Cheong-man, Eric	(from Sept 2014)
	Ms HO Wai-han, Rachel	(from July 2013 to Aug 2014)
	Ms HUNG Lai-ting, Venus (EDB)	(until July 2013)

Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on  
Ethics and Religious Studies (Senior Secondary) -  
Working Group (Buddhism)

(From December 2003 to September 2013)

**Members:** Mr CHOI Kai-kwong  
  
Mr LAM Yiu-wing  
  
Ms LAU Ngar-sze  
  
Dr LIU Ming-wood  
  
Ms LOK Wai-ling  
  
Ven SIK WAI-wing

**Secretary:** Ms HUNG Lai-ting, Venus

Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on  
Ethics and Religious Studies (Senior Secondary) -  
Working Group (Christianity)

(From December 2003 to September 2013)

**Members:** Ms HO Yin-man  
  
Mr LEUNG Yat-sum  
  
Dr WONG Kun-chun, Eric  
  
Ms WONG Wai-yee  
  
Mr WOO Wai-ki  
  
Mr YIP Cheong-man

**Secretary:** Ms HUNG Lai-ting, Venus

Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on  
Ethics and Religious Studies (Senior Secondary) -  
Working Group (Ethics)

(From December 2003 to September 2013)

- Members:** Dr CHAN Shun-hing
- Ms CHAN So-wan, Teresa
- Dr KUNG Lap-yan
- Mr LAM Yiu-wing
- Ms LAU Ngar-sze
- Mr LEUNG Yat-sum
- Ms LOK Wai-ling
- Ms NG Yik-man
- Mr YIP Cheong-man
- Secretary:** Ms HUNG Lai-ting, Venus

## Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies

(From September 2013 – August 2015)

**Chairperson:** Mr YIM Chi-shing

**Members:** Ms CHAN Chung-ting  
Prof CHAN Lung-pun, Common  
Dr CHAN Shun-hing  
Mr CHEUNG Fung  
Mr HO Chi-yin  
Prof KUNG Lap-yan  
Sr KWOK Ming-ying, Anita  
Mr LI Man-shun  
Dr LUNG Ching-leung  
Mr MAK Ka-wai, Prometheus  
Ven Dr SIK Fa-ren

**Ex-officio Members:** Mr WOO Chun-kit, Keith (EDB) (from July 2013 to  
Dec 2014)  
Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith (EDB ) (from Dec 2014)  
Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)

**Secretary:** Ms HO Wai-han, Rachel (EDB) (from July 2013 to  
Aug 2014)  
Mr YIP Cheong-man, Eric (EDB) (from Sept 2014)

Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on  
Ethics and Religious Studies (Senior Secondary) -  
Working Group (SBA)

(From September 2013 to August 2015)

- Members:** Mr CHEUNG Fung
- Mr MAK Ka-wai
- Sr KWOK Ming-ying, Anita
- Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)
- Secretary:** Ms HO Wai-han, Rachel (EDB)
- Ms CHAN Kit-ling, Candy (EDB)



# Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies

(From September 2015)

**Chairperson:** Mr LI Man-shun

**Members:** Ms CHAN Chung-ting  
Prof CHAN Lung-pun, Common  
Mr CHEUNG Fung  
Ms TAM Yun-ming  
Prof TAM Yik-fai  
Ms CHAN Sze-wan  
Dr LUNG Ching-leung  
Mr MAK Ka-wai, Prometheus  
Ven Dr SIK Fa-ren  
Ms TJON Chun-yee

**Ex-officio Members:** Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith (EDB )  
Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)

**Secretary:** Mr YIP Cheong-man, Eric (EDB)

# Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies

(From September 2017)

**Chairperson:** Mr MAK Ka-wai, Prometheus

**Members:** Rev CHOY Wai-man  
Prof IP Hon-ho  
Mr CHEUNG Fung  
Ms TAM Yun-ming  
Dr CHAN Ka-fu, Keith  
Ms CHAN Sze-wan  
Dr HO Wing-hon  
Mr LI Man-shun  
Ven Dr SIK Fa-ren  
Ms TJON Chun-yee

**Ex-officio Members:** Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith (EDB )  
Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)

**Secretary:** Mr YIP Cheong-man, Eric (EDB)

# Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies

(From September 2019)

- Chairperson:** Ms CHAN Sze-wan
- Members:** Dr CHAN Ka-fu, Keith  
Dr HO Wing-hon  
Mr CHOW Yuk-kwan  
Mr LEE Lok-shing  
Ms HUI Pui-ki, Karen  
Ms KWONG Kit-yi  
Prof IP Hon-ho  
Rev CHOY Wai-man  
Ven SIK Hin-hung
- Ex-officio Members:** Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith (EDB )  
Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)
- Secretary:** Mr YIP Cheong-man, Eric (EDB)

# Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies

(From September 2021)

**Chairperson:** Ms HUI Pui-ki, Karen

**Members:** Dr CHAN Ka-fu, Keith  
Rev CHOY Wai-man  
Mr CHOW Yuk-kwan  
Ms KWONG Kit-yi  
Mr LEE Lok-shing  
Dr LAI Yiu-cho, Joe  
Ven SIK Hin-hung  
Dr TUNG Kiu-kit

**Ex-officio Members:** Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith (EDB )  
Mr LEUNG Yat-sum (HKEAA)

**Secretary:** Mr YIP Cheong-man, Eric (EDB)

# Membership of the CDC-HKEAA Committee on Ethics and Religious Studies

(From September 2023)

**Chairperson:** Ms HUI Pui-ki, Karen

**Members:** Ms CHAN So-lai  
Mr CHOW Yuk-kwan  
Mr HUI, David  
Mr KWAN Yiu-wang  
Prof KWOK Wai-luen  
Ms KWONG Kit-yi  
Dr LAI Yiu-cho, Joe  
Ven SIK Hin-hung  
Dr XIE Gan-lin, David  
Dr YUEN Mee-yin, Mary

**Ex-officio Members:** Dr LAI Ling-yan, Edith (EDB )  
Dr TANG Man-to (HKEAA)

**Secretary:** Dr YIP Cheong-man, Eric (EDB)

## **Membership list of CDC Committee on Personal, Social & Humanities Education**

(From 1 September 2023)

### **Chairperson:**

Mr LAM Man-kit  
Principal  
TWGHs Chang Ming Thien College

### **Vice-chairperson:**

Mr WONG Wang-fai  
Chief Curriculum Development Officer  
(Personal, Social and Humanities Education)  
Curriculum Development Institute  
Education Bureau  
Ex-officio member

### **Member:**

Dr AU Po-man  
Vice Principal  
True Light Middle School of Hong Kong

Ms AU Yuen-yee, Mandy  
Co-director  
Centre for Religious and Spirituality Education  
The Education University of Hong Kong

Mr CHAN Chi-yuen  
Economics and Tourism and Hospitality Studies Panel  
Head  
Po Chiu Catholic Secondary School

Ms FAN Sze-ki  
Manager–Assessment Development  
Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority  
Ex-officio Member

Mr FUNG Kam-chan  
Vice Principal  
The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong  
Cornwall School

Mr KWAN Chun-wing, Newton  
Geography Panel Head  
Munsang College

Prof KWONG Che-leung  
Dean, Professor of Economics  
School of Arts and Social Sciences  
Hong Kong Metropolitan University

Ms LAM Shuk-fong  
Principal  
King's College Old Boys' Association Primary School  
No.2

Ms LAM Tuen-yee  
Senior Quality Assurance Officer (Quality Assurance)  
Quality Assurance Division  
Education Bureau  
Ex-officio Member

Prof LAU Chi-pang  
Associate Vice-President (Academic Affairs and  
External Relations) and  
Professor of Department of History  
Lingnan University

Mr LEUNG Kai-chung  
PSHE Coordinator and History Panel Head  
Confucian Tai Shing Ho Kwok Pui Chun College

Mr LEUNG Pak-kin  
Associate General Secretary  
Breakthrough Ltd.

Ms LOK Wai-ling  
Vice Principal  
Buddhist Tai Hung College

Ms LUN Nga-man  
Teacher  
CCC Heep Woh Primary School (Cheung Sha Wan)

Dr MAH Ngar-yin  
Chairperson  
Hong Kong Geographical Association

Mr PANG Ka-keung  
Principal  
The Yuen Yuen Institute MFBM Nei Ming Chan Lui  
Chung Tak Memorial College

Mr YUNG Kong-sing  
Principal  
CCC Kei San Secondary School

**Secretary:**

Mr CHAN Hong  
Senior Curriculum Development Officer (Personal,  
Social and Humanities Education)  
Curriculum Development Institute  
Education Bureau