

WJEC A Level GCE in Religious Studies

Glossary of Key Terms

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NOTE TO CANDIDATES

Very often the terms referred to in the Glossary are by definition controversial, with no settled meaning. Indeed, the terms themselves may well be the basis of a question in the examination. The brief definition provided in these lists is merely a general introduction and should not be treated as sufficient for the answering of questions asked about the specific terms as listed.

Terms which are used in the specification are printed in **bold** print. It is particularly important to be familiar with these, as they may be used on examination question papers.

RS3 CS: Studies in Religion in Contemporary Society (A2)

Anglicanism	A term used to differentiate the ‘English’ Church from Roman Catholicism after the Act of Supremacy in 1534. Now the Anglican Church is a world-wide communion.
Berger	Born 1929. American sociologist and theologian most famous for his work <i>The Social Construction of Reality</i> , and for wrongly predicting total secularisation.
blasphemy	From the Greek ‘speaking evil’ . Speaking disrespectfully about God, or insulting any item of orthodox religious belief.
capitalism	Economic system driven by the motivation for profit, and requiring private investment to provide the means of production, distribution and exchange
Church of England	The officially established Church in England, a member of the Anglican Communion
civil partnership ceremonies	Granted under the Civil Partnership Act 2004 to give same-sex couples rights and responsibilities identical to civil marriage. Civil Partners are entitled to the same property rights as married opposite-sex couples, the same exemption as married couples on inheritance tax, social security and pension benefits, and also the ability to get parental responsibility for a partner's children, as well as responsibility for reasonable maintenance of one's partner and their children, tenancy rights, life insurance recognition, next-of-kin rights in hospitals, etc. There is a formal process for dissolving partnerships akin to divorce. No religious rituals or readings are permitted in Civil Partnership Ceremonies, and they may not take place in a religious building.
community cohesion	See <i>social cohesion</i>
conscience	A sense of morality which governs a person's thoughts and actions. A person may have a strong conscience or a weak one.
defender of the faith	(In Latin <i>fidei defensor</i>). The title given to the British Monarch by the British Parliament since 1544 reflecting the fact that with this position comes the title Supreme Governor of the Church of England (i.e. superior to the Archbishop of Canterbury)
developmental theory	Any theory which assumes that the individual (or societies) pass through stages of development (such as the development of religious belief, cognitive ability or moral reasoning).
‘Dimensions’ of religion	Suggested by Ninian Smart in <i>The World's Religions</i> (1998): Practical and ritual Experiential and emotional Narrative and mythic Doctrinal and philosophical Ethical and legal Social and institutional Material

Durkheim	Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) was a French sociologist and considered as one of the founding fathers of sociology. He was not interested in whether the claims of religion were true or not, but in how religions expressed the values of society. He understood the nature of religion as the inevitable expression of society's values, and considered it crucial for social cohesion.
Eliade	Mircea Eliade (1907–1986) was a Romanian historian of religion, philosopher, and professor at the University of Chicago. He was a leading interpreter of religious experience, who established theories in religious studies that persist to this day. He argued that experiences of the sacred form the basis of religion, splitting the human experience of reality into sacred and profane space and time.
establishment	The recognition by law of the supremacy of a church (i.e. in England, the Church of England, which is seen as the 'official' religion).
ethnography	The study of people in terms of their ethnic groups
faith communities	A term used to describe people who practice religions. (Sometimes considered an unhelpful term, as not all religious traditions emphasise 'faith')
Formalist	Formalists emphasise the aesthetic unities and disunities in a given film. Formalists also tend to view the multiple elements of film production, and the effects, emotional and intellectual, of those individual elements
Fowler, James	Professor of Theology at Emory University and author of <i>Stages of Faith</i> (1981), which argued that the individual passes through six stages of the development of faith through their lifetime
free speech	Recognised as a human right under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the right to express and disseminate opinions. In Islam this was established in the 7 th Century under Caliph Umar. Freedom of Speech is sometimes curtailed by laws when it is perceived to come into conflict with other values.
functional/functionalist	Accounts of religion which focus on how it 'functions' in society, or in the life of an individual i.e. what benefits it brings.
Goldman, Ronald	Author of <i>Readiness for Religion</i> (1965) and <i>Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence</i> (1964)
Hardy, Sir Alister	Sir Alister Clavering Hardy (1896-1985) was an Oxford-educated marine biologist. He founded the Religious Experience Research Centre in 1969, after retiring as a professor of zoology at Oxford.
healthy-mindedness	The healthy-minded are described in William James's <i>The Varieties of Religious Experience</i> (1902) as having a naturally positive outlook on life. They are those who are psychologically stable, see life as basically good and God as benign.

interfaith dialogue	Sometimes understood as the attempt to find common ground between the religions, but technically simply discussion between those who belong to different religions
Islamophobia	Stereotyping of or prejudice against Muslims or Islam. Literally ‘fear’ of Islam
Leavisite	One who follows the central doctrines of the literary critic, FR Leavis, applying his approaches to European literature to the medium of film. In this sense it is the relationship between the form/composition of the film and the moral interest of the filmmaker reflecting in turn the relationship between art and life
Lords Spiritual	The Lords Spiritual of the United Kingdom, also called Spiritual Peers, are the 26 clergy of the established Church of England who serve in the House of Lords along with the Lords Temporal. The established Church of Scotland is not represented by spiritual peers. The Anglican Churches in Wales and Northern Ireland are no longer established churches and are therefore not represented either
Marx	Karl Marx (1818-1883): German philosopher and political theorist who argued that belief in religion was a comfort to people that prevented them from taking action to overcome oppression
Maslow	Abraham Maslow (1908 -1970): American psychologist whose theories about self-actualisation and peak experiences are relevant to the study of religion
metaphysical	To do with the first principles of nature, being, or thought. Often the word indicates something transcendent – above and beyond the world
Middle East	In the context of the specification the term ‘Middle East’ refers primarily to Israel/Palestine, but also to other areas of conflict such as Iraq and Afghanistan
national identity	The notion that a set of characteristics and values are held in common by people of the same nation
neurosis	A mental disturbance created by unconscious conflict
numinous	Suffused with the divine
Otto	Rudolf Otto (1869-1937): author of <i>The Idea of the Holy</i> (1917) which introduced ideas of the numinous and <i>mysterium tremendum</i> and <i>mysterium fascinans</i> to the study of religions
parapsychology	The study of means by which the mind can gain information super-normally (such as by clairvoyance, telepathy etc)
peak experience	A term used by Abraham Maslow to describe blissful experiences in which the self is transcended. Many religious people report such experiences

personality	The distinctive psychological and emotional features of a person
Piagetian	Pertaining to Jean Piaget, and his stage theory of cognitive development
plurality	Denotes more than one religion or culture within a community or nation
profane	A term used by Emile Durkheim to refer to the secular realm.
psychoanalysis	The process of therapy which traces neuroses to hidden features of the unconscious mind. Freud's therapy is psychoanalytic
Rankin, Marianne	Chair of the Alister Hardy Society and author of books on religious experiences
readiness for religion	A stage theory concept of Ronald Goldman's which claims that younger children cannot understand religious language as they are not 'ready' for it, and that education can help to nurture this 'readiness'
realist	In film, one who depicts subjects as they appear in everyday life, without embellishment or interpretation. Literally making films that show life in its 'real/true' form.
reductive	An adjective which describes a theory which 'explains' a phenomenon in terms of a discourse not directly related to that phenomenon. For example, the phenomenon of belief in God could be explained theologically (non-reductive) or psychologically (reductive).
religious	
- freedom	A situation in which it is possible to believe and practise any religion without interference from the State. Nation States operate policies of greater or lesser religious freedom. It is never an absolute.
- heritage	Cultures, and sometimes nations, are often understood to have a religious heritage. The term is vague and can reflect anything from strong contemporary adherence to nominal adherence, and the persistence of institutions with religious assumptions in their constitutions. In both cases, the presence of some level of religious commitment is at least in part a consequence of a particular religion's dominance in the past. The term is a rhetorical one which can be used in many different ways.
sacred	Term used by writers such as Mircea Eliade and Emile Durkheim (in different ways) to denote the holy
sacred canopy	Term used by Peter Berger to describe the way in which religion preserves social order
satire	Satire involves ridiculing something, often with the use of irony. To provide a critique which to some would seem humorous.

self-actualization	A term used by Abraham Maslow to denote the process of the transcendence of self to be found in many religious traditions and psychological theories
semiotics	This area considers the relationship between signs and their social meanings, 'signs' being words, a visual image, a sound or any components of the 'world within the frame.' Thus film is an interconnected series of signifying systems, unlike the unitary signifying system of writing
Sharpe	Eric J Sharpe: author of <i>Understanding Religion</i> (1983)
sick soul	The sick-souled are described in William James's <i>The Varieties of Religious Experience</i> (1902) as having a naturally negative outlook on life. They tend towards depression and seeing the world as evil
six stages of faith	Proposed by James Fowler, a six-staged theory of the way faith develops in the individual through his/her lifetime
Smart, Ninian	Professor Ninian Smart (1927-2001) established the first department of Religious Studies, at Lancaster University in 1967. A prolific writer on the world's religions, he is perhaps best known for his theory of the seven dimensions of religion in <i>The World's Religions</i> (first ed 1989 2nd ed 1998)
social cohesion	Also termed community cohesion, this has become a governmental aspiration since race riots in 2001 in Bradford and Burnley. It is normally characterised by tolerance and respect for other people and positive interactions between individuals and communities. It is also about the extent of social inclusion or integration of people into the mainstream institutions of civil society. It includes people's sense of belonging to their nation and the strength of shared experiences, identities and values between those from different backgrounds. It also refers to the level of fairness in access to opportunities or material circumstances, such as income, health or quality of life
sociology	The study of society
State	A country separated from others by the jurisdiction of its government
stereotyping	To characterise or categorise (a person, ethnic group, members of a religion, members of any particular group) too simplistically or negatively
theological	Pertaining to the discipline of Theology, which is often understood as 'faith seeking understanding,' or 'faith thinking'
truth claims	The core claims made by religions such as God(s) exists, the world was created, liberation is possible, there is life after death, etc

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

A declaration adopted by the United Nations in 1948 consisting of 30 'articles' comprised of statements of human rights, which inform the laws of most countries and are used as part of international pressure when a country is seen to be flouting these rights. The Declaration has its critics, amongst which are those who see it as having basis in a Judeo-Christian worldview

Weber

Max Weber (1864-1920) was a sociologist and political economist who argued that the rise of Protestantism coincided with the rise of capitalism because the two notions supported each other.

worship

The expression of devotion or praise to God(s), saints, enlightened beings etc. In normal usage worship refers to those activities directed towards a divine being. However since the word implies anything 'worthy', Buddhists sometimes use it to refer to devotions paid to the image of the Buddha, who is seen as an example rather than as a deity in many forms of Buddhism.

Zionism

The belief that the land of Israel belongs to the Jews

- religious

The belief that the land of Israel belongs to the Jews because God decreed it.

- secular

The belief that the land of Israel belongs to the Jews as their nation from which they have been in exile for historical reasons, and which provides an essential refuge from worldwide anti-semitism

RS3 ETH: Studies in Religion and Ethics (A2)

a posteriori	On the basis of experience. A concept used by Emmanuel Kant (see below) to describe unacceptable approaches to morality or ethics that were dependent on experience in determining what was ethical and what was not. Such approaches would inevitably be relativistic and, as such, for Kant morally unacceptable. (See also <i>synthetic</i> below)
a priori	Without, independent of or prior to experience. Kant claimed that the only valid moral principles were by their nature <i>a priori</i> since they were by definition moral duties or obligations, and as such were absolute in their demands. (See also <i>analytical</i> below)
abortion	A medical procedure to terminate a pregnancy, normally before the foetus can survive independently.
absolutism	An ethical position which is based on principles to which there can be no exception under any circumstances.
analytical	Based upon detailed examination of the logic of a principle, argument or statement. Kant argued that moral statements had to be <i>a priori</i> (see above) analytical statements, based on logic and not on experience.
Anscombe, Elizabeth	(1919-2001): a philosopher who coined the term 'consequentialism' and had a significant influence on modern virtue ethics, arguing against ethics based on obligation and duty and in favour of ethics based on character, virtue and flourishing
Aquinas	13 th Century Dominican priest, commonly regarded as the most influential philosopher and theologian of the Roman Catholic Church. Chiefly responsible for developing the ethical theory of Natural Law
Aristotle	A Greek philosopher (384-322 BCE), who had an enormous influence on the history of thought, and who developed <i>virtue ethics</i> (see below).
Augustine	Early Church Father, Augustine of Hippo, converted to Christianity relatively late on in his life. Great intellectual force responsible for the formalisation of what is now accepted as Christian orthodoxy in terms of belief and ethics. Developed the earliest formulation of the Just War theory
bioethics	The area of ethics concerned with making moral judgements about the use (or abuse) of biological organisms, biological experiment and the development of medical treatments and procedures
Buddhist	Either a person who follows the religion of the Buddha or as applied to the principles and ethics derived from the Buddha's teaching

cardinal virtues	Human moral qualities defined by Aquinas, drawing on previous Christian philosophical reflection by Augustine and others, defined as prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, usually set alongside the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity (see I Corinthians 13:13)
Categorical Imperative	An ethical principle, developed by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), which sought to define universal ethical obligations (or 'oughts') without reference to the existence of a transcendent being and based only on human reason
civil conflicts	Violent hostility and tension between opposing groups within a society or state, often involving armed struggle (see <i>conflict</i> below)
cloning	Genetic manipulation involving the transfer of genetic material from one organism to cells of another organism in order to produce an exact replica of the original organism
conflict	A state of severe disagreement, opposition or hostility between individuals, groups or states which can be expressed in terms of extreme verbal or violent exchanges but often leads to armed confrontation or war
conscience	An inner personal conviction that determines a particular course of ethical behaviour
consequentialist	Ethical theories based on the outcome of an action or actions rather than on the inherent morality of the action or actions
conservative evangelical	An understanding of Christianity which is based on a traditional interpretation of the key aspects of Christian belief, including the absolute centrality of the Bible (which may also include a literal approach to Biblical text), the necessity for conversion, the centrality of the cross of Christ as a means of salvation and the obligation of evangelism. Usually this embraces a traditional view of Christian ethics
conventional weapons	Weapons used traditionally in warfare but not including nuclear (and occasionally biological) weapons
deontological	An ethical principle which maintains that an act is right or wrong in itself – irrespective of the consequences of the act – and that, therefore, carries a duty or obligation of obedience
discrimination	Behaviour towards a person or group on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, racial group, ethnic origin or religion (see <i>positive discrimination</i>)
doctrine	A religion's body of teaching on matters of faith and belief
duty	A moral obligation, derived from a particular religious belief or ethical law or theory, to act in a certain way both in relation to oneself and to others. Usually 'duty' is understood to be both absolute (see <i>absolutism</i> above) and universal (i.e. applicable to everyone at all times)

economic purposes	Actions and policies by international organisations, states or communal governments, or national and transnational companies aimed at achieving certain goals in relation to financial and commercial processes. Such policies and actions inevitably raise important ethical questions in areas such as equality, fairness and discrimination
embryo	The earliest stages of the unborn human organism, normally within the uterus, that results from conception. The term is normally applied to such cellular organisms up to eight weeks after conception. Thereafter, they are called a <i>foetus</i> (see below).
emotivist ethics	An ethical theory which is based on the assumption that people primarily make ethical decisions on the basis of feeling and emotion rather than principles and rational argument
empirical	An understanding of reality based on tested evidence, normally, gathered through scientific experiment and observation, often seen to be in conflict with a religious (and, perhaps, more metaphysical) understanding of reality. This approach derives largely from the eighteenth century European Enlightenment
ensoulment	A term traditionally used in relation to the ethical teaching of Augustine and Aquinas, for example, to describe the process by which an embryo comes to possess a soul, and therefore may be thought to have greater moral significance. The term is usually, deployed in discussions about whether or not <i>abortion</i> (see above) is ethically permitted
end in itself	An ethical or moral action which is justified because it is regarded as intrinsically good, according to a particular ethical or religious principle, as opposed to an action which may be regarded as good because of the consequences which may result from that action
ethical	An adjective based on ‘ethics’ see below (eg an ethical theory)
- conditions	Situations, behaviours or contexts derived from ethical principles that may have a bearing on moral actions or decisions
- decision-making	The process of determining the moral principles or actions that derive from either religious belief or ethical theory
- theories	A range of structured philosophical approaches (e.g. natural law or utilitarianism) that attempt to set out a basis for ethical principles or actions
ethicist	A person who is engaged in study and writing concerning ethics
ethics	The study of principles and values on the basis of which human beings make decisions about the way they behave

euthanasia	Literally ‘a good death’, it describes a medical procedure by which either a person terminates his or her own life because of extreme pain or suffering or the life of another person is either allowed to come to an end or is brought to an end, with legal consent, and with the assistance of others, because of a critical medical condition. Any form of euthanasia is illegal in most countries at the present time
- voluntary	Euthanasia with the full and conscious desire and consent of the person whose life is to be terminated
- involuntary	Euthanasia by which the life of the person concerned is brought to an end while the person himself or herself is unconscious, but with their prior written and legal desire and consent
- non-voluntary	Euthanasia which brings to an end, for reasons of mercy and compassion, the life of a person who, either because of mental incapacity or of their being in a ‘permanent vegetative state’, cannot make a decision for themselves but who, in the judgement of family and medical experts, would have made a decision in favour of euthanasia had they been in a position to do so
experiential	Based on experience. For example, ethical decision-making (see above) based on a person’s experience rather than solely on religious principle or ethical theory
- corroboration	Confirmation, derived from experience, of the validity (see below) of an ethical action and/or theory
fairness	A condition in which people are treated in an equal and unbiased way
feminist approaches	In the context of ethics, ways of developing and defining ethical principles and actions—usually by female ethicists, philosophers or theologians—that reflect the greater attention that has been given to the perspectives and insights of women, especially during the latter half of the twentieth century. One example of such an approach is <i>the ethics of care</i> which emphasizes the importance of human relationships rather than individual justice
foetus	The unborn baby within the womb or uterus. The term is normally applied from eight weeks after conception to birth. (See also <i>embryo</i> above)
Gandhianism	Religious, spiritual, moral and ethical teaching based upon the work and example of Gandhi (1869-1948)—one of the key leaders of the campaign for Indian independence—and derived mainly from Hinduism (but also with strong Christian influences). At the heart of Gandhianism is an ethic of non-violence, pacifism, and civil disobedience in the face of conflict. Gandhi was an inspiration to other campaigners such as Martin Luther King Jnr in the civil rights movement in the USA

genetic	An adjective that refers to the activities of genes, the key cellular structures that determine the biological and other inherited characteristics of living organisms. [<i>Genetics</i> is the term used to describe the study of such phenomena].
- ethics	The study of moral principles which have emerged from and relate to genetics, and which raise complex moral challenges
- manipulation	Scientific techniques that re-order, exchange and restructure genetic materials, either within a particular organism or between similar or dissimilar organisms, for scientific, medical or other purposes. The key ethical question is whether such techniques can ever be morally justified.
goodness	A human quality which, for many ethicists (such as Aquinas and Kant), is the framework and goal of ethical and moral behaviour. The moral opposite of 'goodness' is 'evil'
highest good	The term used by Kant and others to describe the ultimate goal of human life. For Kant, this <i>summum bonum</i> (highest good) could not be achieved within any human life-time, and therefore implies the existence of God and an after-life in and through which this ultimate goal may be achieved
historical approach	An approach to ethics that seeks to bring wisdom and insight from past events, thought and action to bear, in decisive ways, on contemporary ethical thinking and decision-making
Holy War (jihad)	Commonly understood to refer to an Islamic concept of armed struggle or war in defence of Islam or Islamic territory; jihad ('struggle') more accurately refers to the spiritual struggle against evil which should characterise the daily life of every Muslim, and which may involve collective action against injustice, violence, etc.
human duty	(see <i>duty</i> above)
human intervention	Actions by human beings, often in a medical context, which set out to change the course of what otherwise might be natural, possibly, catastrophic consequences. The ethical questions focus on the degree to which such actions can be morally justified within different contexts
human reason	A characteristic regarded as being unique to human beings which enables them to apply intellectual, rational thought to decisions about their own behaviour and that of others. Philosophers such as Aquinas and Kant saw human reason as the fundamental faculty by which human beings make responsible ethical decisions
human rights	The entitlement of human beings to be treated with equality, justice and respect, defined most fully in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
Hypothetical Imperative	The opposite of Categorical Imperative in Kant's moral theory (see above) which posits conditional rather than absolute ethical principles ('If I want to achieve this ethical consequence then I must act in this way')

intellectual virtues	The desirable human characteristics which, according to Aristotle (see above) and his more modern followers (e.g. Anscombe or McIntyre – see glossary entry), are developed through the trained deployment of rational thought. Examples of such virtues include intelligence and prudence. He set these alongside <i>moral virtues</i> (see below), among which he included courage and liberality
intuitive judgements	Moral decisions made on the basis of instinctive and subjective, rather than external and objective, human responses
jus ad bellum	The ethical conditions for going to war as set out within the Just War theory. The seven conditions are: just authority, just cause, just intention, proportionality, last resort, reasonable chance of success, and comparative justice
jus in bello	The ethical conditions for engagement in warfare developed in parallel with <i>jus in bellum</i> above. Traditionally these are: proportionality (i.e. using minimal force) and discrimination (i.e. making every effort to avoid civilian, non-combatative victims).
Just War	A Christian concept, developed originally by Augustine and Aquinas (see above) and supplemented by Suarez and de Vitoria in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which seeks to set out a number of conditions for going to war and for conduct in war. (See <i>jus ad bellum</i> and <i>jus in bello</i> above).
justice	A condition in which people are treated with equality and fairness, both generally and before the law
Kant	Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German philosopher who proposed universal ethical principles based on the concept of the categorical imperative or universal law of duty
Kingdom of Ends	Refers to one formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperative which states that a person should act 'as if you were through your maxim a law-making member of a kingdom of ends'. In other words, human ethical behaviour must be determined not only by attitudes and actions of respect towards persons as individuals but also by attitudes and actions of respect towards all persons in relationship within society. I cannot merely ask 'Can I behave like this?' I have rather to ask, 'Is this acceptable behaviour for everyone within the state or community?'
liberal approaches	Radical perspectives on ethics which derive from new theological and philosophical thinking mainly developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and which challenge many traditional and conservative ethical viewpoints (e.g. Situation Ethics – see below).
Logical Positivism	A philosophical position which states that no argument or statement can be valid unless it can be shown to be true by logic or experimental data and that any argument or statement which cannot be proved in this way is, simply, meaningless

MacIntyre, Alasdair	A philosopher who is the author of <i>A Short History of Ethics</i> , a history of moral philosophy ‘from the Homeric Age to the Twentieth Century’ and who made an important contribution to the revival of virtue ethics, originated by Aristotle and others (see below) which emphasises that ethical behaviour should be determined by asking ‘What kind of persons should we be?’ rather than ‘What kind of actions should we undertake?’
maxim	A universal ethical principle developed within the framework of Kant’s Categorical Imperative
mean, doctrine of the	A term used in Aristotelian ethics to define moral virtues as those that lie between the vice of deficiency and the vice of excess. For example, courage is a moral virtue to be desired and developed. It is the mean between the deficiency of cowardice and the excess of rash behaviour or recklessness. MacIntyre criticised the doctrine as being of varying usefulness and rather abstract and non-practical
meaningless	A statement which is nonsense (<i>ie</i> does not have any rational sense)
medical dilemmas	Ethical questions or challenges raised by treatments and techniques that are open to doctors and other specialist staff e.g. should abortion be made universally available, when and to whom; how is the choice made between spending a large sum of money on very advanced treatment that might extend or save the life of one person and spending the same sum of money on improving the health and life expectancy of a number of people?
medical ethics	Study of and writing or communication about the ethical issues raised in the various fields of medicine, especially questions raised by the rapid development of medical and surgical treatments in recent decades
moral	Normally regarded as having a similar meaning to ‘ethics’ i.e. the study of the philosophical and/or theological principles by which ethical decisions are made and on the basis of which human beings engage in ethical action. Some distinguish between ‘moral’ as relating primarily to the philosophical study of such principles and precepts and ‘ethics’ as relating primarily to the ways in which such principles and precepts are acted out in decision-making and action
- action	Human behaviour which arises from, is based upon and reflects developed moral (or ethical) principles
- authority	The foundation upon which moral thought or ethical principles are based e.g. divine revelation; the Bible or the Qur’an; religious leaders; approved and accepted ethical principles or theories
- character	The sum of those features of the personalities of individual human beings that have developed as a result of the practice of virtues and actions that derive from the application of ethical and religious principles to human behaviour. Usually used in a positive sense (and, therefore, reflecting goodness).

(moral) - deficiencies	Those features in the personalities and actions of human beings that reflect a lack of moral character (see above) and a failure to behave in ethically acceptable ways. Whereas 'courage' is a virtue, 'cowardice' is a deficiency.
- excesses	The opposite of 'moral deficiencies', often associated with virtue ethics, describing a person as displaying moral characteristics that lead to exaggerated, and often harmful, zeal in pursuing a particular course of action e.g. whereas a deficiency of courage leads to cowardice, excessive courage leads to recklessness.
- law	Authoritative rules which define what is right and wrong in all areas of human life, usually based on religious doctrines or principles, which may or may not be incorporated in the governing law of a nation or state
- theory	Structured moral arguments that seek to offer a foundation for and an approach to moral decision making, usually, but not always, avoiding an appeal to religious authority e.g. utilitarianism or virtue theory
- virtues	Human characteristics that display 'goodness' (see above) usually developed as a result of practised ethical awareness and behaviour
morality	A body of principles and values which are intended to be the basis for people's decisions about their conduct. Often used interchangeably with 'ethics'
natural processes	Physical, biological and chemical reactions and events through which the universe and human beings within the physical realities of the universe have developed and continue to develop e.g. geological and meteorological events, reproduction, genetic inheritance, birth, death.
narrative approach	A way of exploring moral issues that is based on historical and contemporary accounts (or stories) as a means of developing ethical principles or actions. Thus ethical dilemmas are examined using actual or fictional case studies rather than established ethical theories.
<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>	Also known as <i>Ta Ethika</i> , was written by Aristotle (see above) and is the main source for his theory of moral virtue (see above). It consists of ten books based on notes from his lectures at the Lyceum which were either edited by or dedicated to Aristotle's son, Nicomachus

nuclear deterrence	The argument that the possession and threatened use of nuclear weapons by the major world powers has maintained (and continues to maintain) a level of world peace (or at least a reduced level of international conflict) that has so far avoided mutual annihilation, either at regional or global levels. Many would argue that the possession of nuclear weapons increases the level of global threat rather than reduces it. It is further argued that deterrence based on the threat of the use of nuclear weapons is meaningless unless states are actually prepared to use them. Since their use is considered by many as morally unjustifiable the threat of their use is similarly immoral.
nuclear weapons	Weapons of mass destruction which derive their power from nuclear reactions of either atomic fusion or fission, both of which can be harnessed to release vast amounts of energy from a relatively small amount of nuclear matter. Such explosions would devastate a vast area of land and life within considerable distances from the explosion itself. The Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain the only examples of the horrific effects of the deployment of nuclear weapons
pacifism	A belief, usually rooted in religious principles, that no violence nor war can ever be justified under any conditions. The teaching of Jesus and the examples of Gandhi and Martin Luther King are often quoted as a basis for pacifist thinking. Pacifism is usually closely associated with the principle of non-violence in international conflicts and personal/social relationships
personhood	The term is usually deployed to describe the condition of a human foetus or embryo which has developed (or acquired) the characteristics of human personality. Ethical debates are normally focussed on the stage of human development at which such features are acquired and the degree to which the possession of such characteristics affects decisions about the morality of abortion
philosophical	A logical, reasoned and structured approach to reflection and thought, including a rational approach to ethical decision-making (often termed ‘moral philosophy’)
pluralist context	The multi-faith, multi-cultural and multi-racial nature of society which may have a bearing on individual and social moral behaviour
positive discrimination	A policy which demands deliberate action (for example, in the area of employment) in favour of those who may be marginalised on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, racial group, ethnic origin or religion.
pre-emptive military action/strikes	Armed action by a state (or states) against another state (or states) aimed at preventing a perceived and more catastrophic threat.
prejudice	A biased attitude in favour of or against particular individuals or groups, often based on preconceptions and generalisations rather than on the basis of justice, fairness and equality

prima facie duties	Definitions of personal obligations to act towards other people on the basis of what appears, at first glance, to be right, as developed, for example, by WD Ross (see below) in response to Kant's categorical imperative (from the Latin, <i>primus</i> [first] and <i>facies</i> [face])
proportionality	One of the criteria of the just war theory (see above) which demands, firstly, that the military action being considered in going to war should be proportional to the perceived threat (e.g. nuclear arms should not be used to combat a local dispute) and, secondly, that military action in pursuance of the war aims should, for example, minimize the force deployed and avoid innocent casualties or collateral damage
quality of life	A human condition in which a person enjoys a degree of physical, intellectual and emotional well-being, the absence of which through severe illness or disability is sometimes used as an argument in favour of euthanasia (see above)
rational thought	(see reason below)
reason	The use of human logic and intellectual understanding to reach a conclusion on the basis of the evidence available
religious perspective	An approach to thought and decision-making (including moral thought and decision-making) based on the assumptions, principles and practices of religion (either a particular religion or religions in general)
research purposes	Situations, data or principles (either actual or theoretical) that are either assumed or specifically developed in order to explore, in an objective way and usually by experimental methods, a particular issue or question or to examine a particular theory
right to die	One possible assumption within the debate about <i>euthanasia</i> (see above) which claims that a person has freedom to make his or her own decision about the moment of death. The debate centres around whether human beings have such a right or whether such a right belongs, for example, only to God
right to life	As with the <i>right to die</i> above, the assumption (not necessarily shared by everyone) that all human beings, whatever their medical condition or mental or intellectual state, have a given, inherent right to continue to live until the moment of their natural death
Ross	WD Ross (1877-1971) was a Scottish philosopher who argued for a deontological ethic based on the assumption that the moral order was a fundamental given and that ethical behaviour should, therefore, be based on a series of <i>prima facie</i> (see above) moral obligations, the case for which does not need to be argued
sanctity of life	A belief that human life is sacred and that, therefore, no person has the right to take his or her own life or the life of another person, whether an unborn foetus or a fully alive human being

secular	Normally used to describe approaches to matters of philosophy or ethics which are specifically not based on religious assumptions but sometimes understood as approaches to such questions that are based on stated opposition to religious beliefs or perspectives
self-defence	Normally deployed in ethical studies to denote military action taken by a state against the threat of an aggressor state, and one of the criteria or principles of <i>jus ad bellum</i> within just war theory
Singer, Peter	A prolific author in ethical studies, who has written or edited a number of textbooks, including <i>The Blackwell Companion to Ethics</i> , <i>The Oxford Reader on Ethics</i> and <i>Practical Ethics</i> . Ethical issues around animal welfare and animal rights have been prominent in his writings.
stem cell research	Scientific experimentation into the medical and other uses of cells (found only within the early stages of the embryo) which can be manipulated in order to develop into a range of medically beneficial tissue cells. The ethical arguments centre on whether the use of embryos—which are subsequently discarded—as a source of such cells can be morally justified merely on the grounds that tissue developed from such processes can be used for the improvement of the quality of life of human beings. Those who oppose abortion (except for when the life of the mother is in danger) regard stem cell research as an infringement of the embryo's <i>right to life</i> and the principle of <i>the sanctity of life</i>
suicide	The taking of one's own life. The ethical issue revolves around the question of whether human beings have the moral right to take their own life
summum bonum	See <i>highest good above</i>
synthetic	In general use meaning manufactured as opposed to natural; in the context of ethics, it is used to describe an argument which is based on experience rather than logic (in contrast to 'analytical'). Kant did not accept that moral statements could be <i>a posteriori</i> (see above) synthetic
teleological	A moral statement or theory which is based on the final goal (or consequence) of an act rather than on its being inherently moral or immoral
terminal illness	An illness which, in medical opinion, will almost inevitably lead to the patient's death
terminal stages of illness	The existence of symptoms (e.g. pneumonia, unconsciousness) which accompany the final period before an expected death

theological	Literally, 'the study of God' but used for reflection, thought and writing on such issues as the nature of God, the meaning of salvation, the nature of the Church, and the nature and behaviour of human beings, and which can include reflection on the religious foundations of moral behaviour. The term is normally (but not exclusively) used within the Christian context
transcendent being	A divine being or mode of life which is above and beyond the natural existence of human beings, usually applied to God or gods
ultimate goal of morality	An attempt or attempts to define the purpose of ethical behaviour. For example, do human beings act morally in order to please God, to build a better society, to achieve personal salvation or eternal life or because the survival of human beings demands certain kinds of behaviour?
Universal Law of Nature	Kant's first formulation of his categorical imperative (see above) which states: 'Act always as if your maxim should become through your action a universal law of nature'. That is, an action should only be morally or ethically acceptable, according to Kant, if it is morally permitted for every person to act in this way
validity	An attempt to define whether a particular ethical theory or principle can be appropriately applied in a particular situation and/or in relation to particular kinds of ethical behaviour. For example, are the Ten Commandments valid (i.e. applicable) as ethical laws in the 21 st century?
very premature babies	Babies that are born either naturally or by caesarian section at such an early stage of pregnancy that they are likely to be able to survive only with considerable medical support (normally between 24 and 28 weeks gestation)
virtue theory	An ethical theory originally developed by Aristotle which seeks to define what kind of behaviour leads to the development of personal or communal qualities of goodness or excellence rather than whether an act is good or bad in itself
war/warfare	Armed conflict between states or sometimes between different factions within a state (such as in a civil war) or between radical groups and the state itself (historically known as guerrilla warfare)

RS3 PHIL: Studies in Philosophy of Religion (A2)

a priori/a posteriori	Distinction between two types of knowledge/argument; ‘a priori’ means without or prior to experience; ‘a posteriori’ means on the basis of experience
abstract qualities	Those things which are metaphysical or ‘abstract’ and cannot be empirically quantified
analogy/ analogical	Non-literal; comparison between two distinct ideas; words/phrases are called ‘analogical’ when their meaning is similar but qualitatively different, especially when applying qualities found amongst humans to God
analytic(al)/synthetic	Distinction between two types of proposition or statement: ‘analytic(al)’ means the proposition is true or false because of the meaning of the words used (eg a totally bald man has no hair on his head); ‘synthetic’ means the proposition requires further clarification or explanation before it can be declared true or false (eg God is love).
Anselm	(c.1033-1109); formulated the ontological argument which tried to prove the existence of God on the basis of reason alone
Aquinas	13 th Century Dominican priest, commonly regarded as the most influential philosopher and theologian of the Roman Catholic Church. Famous works include <i>Summa Theologica</i> and <i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i>
Arminius	Libertarian defender of the traditional concept of providence amongst the Reformers
Augustine	Early Christian Bishop of Hippo (North Africa). Came to Christianity relatively late on in life, having followed a number of different religions and ideologies beforehand, most notably Manicheanism. Hugely influential in the development of Christianity’s moral framework, with particular emphasis on free will. His most famous works are <i>Confessions</i> and <i>City of God</i> .
Ayer	British Philosopher, AJ ‘Freddie’ Ayer. Influential work <i>Language, Truth and Logic</i> championed the cause of logical positivism in the early part of the 20th Century
Barth	Protestant theologian, Karl Barth. Hugely influential in 20th Century theological developments – even recognised as such by Pope Pius XII. Emphasised the notion of ‘election’ in the debate regarding free will and a Christocentric approach to salvation (rejecting natural theology in this)
Big Bang	Scientific theory stating how the universe began. Currently cosmology accepts this view as the ‘best fit’ to explain how universe came to be as it is today (cosmological model)
blik	Word devised by Hare to describe a principle by which a religious believer lives and interprets experience

Buber	Jewish theologian, Martin Buber. Explained humankind's relationship to God in terms of the 'I-Thou' model (as opposed to the I-It of material relationships)
Chisholm	Roderick Chisholm, American 20th Century philosopher. He argued that free will is incompatible with determinism, and believed that we do act freely; this combination of views is known as libertarianism
compatibilist	A person who believes that the concepts of free-will and determinism are not contradictory but rather are entirely compatible with each other
conceivable being	Part of Anselm's ontological argument is that, as God is <i>a being than which nothing greater can be conceived</i> , he must be a reality, not just an idea, since what is real is greater than what is imagined
concept	An idea or philosophical notion
continuous creation	A scientific theory that maintains that the universe maintains a constant average density with matter created to fill the void left by galaxies that are receding from each other
conversion	Turning from disbelief to belief
creation	Concept that all living beings were made distinct from each other by a supernatural power or powers (eg God)
Calvin	French 16 th Century Protestant reformer. Held the belief that salvation was the province of God's sovereignty; thus promoting the idea of predestination.
cultural function	Term used by Randall to convey his understanding of religious language as noncognitive; social purpose of symbols and myths which constitute such language
Darwin	British 19 th Century naturalist, whose observations led to his publication of <i>On the Origin of Species</i> and the proposal that man was the result of a process of evolution arising from natural selection
Dawkins	Richard Dawkins, contemporary British evolutionary biologist who maintains that a belief in God is ultimately irrational and that creation and other 'ultimate mysteries' can all be rationally explained by scientific enquiry
de Chardin, Teilhard	Jesuit priest and philosopher of the early twentieth century. In his work <i>The Phenomenon of Man</i> combined his scientific understanding of paleontology with his theological beliefs to promote a less rigidly literal interpretation of the Genesis account of creation. His position was condemned by the Roman Catholic Church's authorities
Descartes	(1596-1650); promoted reason as most reliable basis for knowledge and analysis and used the method of doubt as a means to arrive at metaphysical truth

determinism	The belief that suggests all events are predestined
- hard	The belief that all actions are ultimately pre-determined and that there is no such thing as a 'free' choice
- soft	The belief that acts can be both caused and free, <i>ie</i> that not all choices are 'compelled'. (Also known as 'compatibilism')
empiricism	The view that knowledge should be based on experience through the senses
environment	The area within which an individual, community or species exists; the circumstances or conditions surrounding an individual, community or species
equivocal	Distinction between two types of words; 'equivocal' words are ones which sound the same but have different meanings (<i>eg</i> foot—being both a imperial measurement equal to twelve inches as well as being the appendage found at the end of a leg)
ethical function	Term used by Braithwaite to convey his understanding of religious language as noncognitive; purpose of religious assertions to state moral intent and justification of moral behaviour
evolution	The scientific theory stating that organisms develop over a period of time/generations, (usually by developing favourable characteristics and dispensing of less favourable ones) in order to adapt more efficiently to their environment
existence	The state of being
existence is not a predicate	Kant's objection to Anselm's classical ontological argument
existential	An approach which begins with the facts of individual concrete experience rather than with general abstract theoretical principles
existential statements	An existential statement is a statement that is true if there is at least one variable within the variable's domain for which the statement is true
experiencing-as	Hick's view that all experience should be considered as 'experiencing-as', in relation to how we understand the concept of faith
faith	Beliefs and resulting way of life based on assumptions and subjective interpretations of experience rather than on proven certainties and empirical evidence
falsification principle	Something is only meaningful if it can be refuted by experience/observation/empirical evidence
fideism	The view that religious beliefs must be accepted by faith and cannot be demonstrated by rational argument; that faith must always take precedence over reason.

Flew	Anthony Flew, 20 th Century philosopher whose work on the falsification principle contributed to the development of the logical positivism movement
free beings	The philosophical notion that human beings have the ability to make moral choices 'free' from any element or agent of compulsion
Freedom Fighter	Parable of Basil Mitchell to support the idea of religious language being meaningful
Gaunilo	Contemporary to St Anselm, criticised the ontological argument by the counter argument of the 'most perfect island'
genes	The biological 'code' that all living beings possess
Hare	RM Hare, 20 th Century philosopher; proposed the idea of the 'blik'
Hawking	Contemporary astro-physicist, one of the world's leading thinkers in this area. Has written extensively on modern cosmology and famously said that finding a great unified theory for everything would be akin to knowing the mind of God
Hick	Professor John Hick has written extensively on the philosophy of religion; has taught that faith should be balanced with reason
Holbach	Paul-Henri Thiry, baron d'Holbach, 18 th Century French philosopher, staunch atheist and a supporter of hard determinism
Holland	RF Holland, philosopher who advocated that miracles could be explained as a set of coincidences
Hume	(1711-1776); sceptic who argued strongly against religious beliefs such as the existence of God and the miraculous on the grounds of their non-rational basis
immortality of the soul	Concept of the eternal existence of non-physical element of each human individual
impossible or necessary	Alternatives presented by Malcolm in his modern version of the ontological argument; Malcolm contends that since God's existence cannot be brought about nor ended by anything and is also not impossible, God must necessarily exist
in continuo	Continuing to act in the world (used in reference to God)
in intellectu	In the mind, as opposed to reality (used in the ontological argument)
in re	In reality, as opposed to in the mind; the ontological argument asserts that God's existence must necessarily be actual rather than imaginary

Intelligent Design (ID)	The theological concept that the universe has an intelligent mind behind its design, as it demonstrates both order and purpose which could not have occurred by chance
inherent	The concept of existing in someone or something as a natural and inseparable quality
interventionist God	See <i>in continuo</i> above; necessary concept in traditional understanding of the existence of miracles
James	William James, 19 th /20 th Century American philosopher who proposed a voluntarist theory of faith; also widely regarded for his work on the classification of religious experiences
Kant	(1724-1804); critic of the ontological argument who used the moral argument to contend for God's existence and life after death
Kierkegaard	(1815-1855); considered that religious faith could never be based on reason and employed approximation (certainty), postponement (commitment) and passion (cost) arguments to demonstrate this
language	The medium of communication
language-game	Idea that the meaning of language can only be understood if the rules of its particular context are understood; term introduced by Wittgenstein and used by later reductionists such as Phillips
laws of nature	Perceived inviolate natural phenomena based on long-term observation of regular occurrences
Lewis, HD	20th Century theologian who asserted that faith in God can be assisted by the proper use of reason, but did not accept that God's existence could be inferred by reference to the world itself
libertarianism	A philosophy which holds that human beings are free, have free will and that any concept of determinism is necessarily false
logical positivism	View which asserts that anything which cannot be verified or falsified by use of sense experience, logic or scientific means is meaningless
Malcolm	Norman Malcolm, 20 th Century philosopher who presented a form of the ontological argument that distinguished between <i>Proslogion 2</i> and <i>Proslogion 3</i>
maximal excellence	Term used by Plantinga in his version of the ontological argument; quality incorporating omnipotence, omniscience and moral perfection and an integral part of maximal greatness
meaningfulness	A criterion applied to language by empiricists/logical positivists, in order to establish whether the words can be verified or falsified

metaphysical	That which is beyond the physical/material; concerned with ultimate questions about existence
Mill	John Stuart Mill. Influential 19 th Century philosopher and social reformer, who taught, as a libertarian, that man is free to do anything unless he harms others
miracle	Act of wonder; variously defined including <i>a violation of the laws of nature</i> (Hume) and <i>an unusual and striking event that evokes and mediates a vivid awareness of God</i> (Hick)
Mitchell	Philosopher Basil Mitchell, whose Freedom Fighter parable was used to illustrate that religious language is meaningful
models and qualifiers	Ramsey's division of religious language; 'model' is a representation which helps understanding of the original; 'qualifier' is a pointer to the way in which the model is to be developed
most perfect island	Gaunilo's analogy in his argument against Anselm
mysticism	Experiences or systematic meditation which causes a heightened awareness of the divine
nature/nurture debate	This is a debate that centres around which of the two aspects, Nature (ie the inherited influences such as our genes and physiological make-up) or Nurture (ie how life has influenced us through our experiences) determines how we behave and live our lives.
necessary elements of relationship	This relates to Buber's classification of relationships as either 'I-thou' (personal) or 'I-It' (material)
necessary existence	Concept that existence is essential to the actual idea of God
non-propositional	Where meaning is conveyed without asserting it; this includes attitudes, feelings and opinions. In this sense, non-propositional revelation refers to the sense of an individual having a feeling that something had been revealed to them
noncognitive	That which cannot be verified or falsified
numinous	Term devised by Otto to describe religious experiences beyond the natural and explicable
ontological argument	Argument for the existence of God based on the concept of the nature of being
origin of the universe	Beginnings of matter and of life
participation	Term associated with Tillich's understanding of religious language as symbolic; inner connection with the reality symbolised; being part of the reality to which the symbol points

Pascal	Blaise Pascal, 17 th Century French philosopher. His famous ‘wager’ is an argument that states it is entirely rational to believe in God and irrational to be irreligious
Peacocke	Arthur Peacocke, 20 th Century theologian and scientist, who argued for the compatibility of Christianity and Evolution, in his work, <i>Evolution: The Disguised Friend of Faith?</i>
Pelagius	Early Christian ascetic c.4 th /5 th Century. Wrote extensively on the freedom of the human will and taught that humans could avoid being sinful and freely choose to obey God’s commands. This brought him into direct opposition with St Augustine of Hippo, especially concerning Augustine’s doctrine of original sin
perfect being	This relates to Anselm’s concept of the necessary existence of the most perfect conceivable being, <i>ie</i> God, in his ontological argument
Phillips	DZ Phillips, 20 th Century philosopher and follower of Wittgenstein, specifically in supporting the concept of language existing within conceptual frameworks (‘language games’)
philosophy/philosophical	Literally the ‘love of wisdom’. Philosophy is the investigation of the nature, causes, or principles of reality, knowledge, or values, based on logical reasoning rather than empirical methods
Plantinga	Contemporary philosopher who contributed to the ontological argument with the concept of ‘possible worlds’
Polkinghorne	Contemporary philosopher, trained as a scientist before becoming ordained. Has sought to reconcile religion and science as complementary fields in the search for truth about the origins of the universe and humankind
possible worlds	Concept used by Plantinga in his ‘modal’ form of the ontological argument to test for logical impossibilities
predestination	The belief that God has already decided what will happen in all things; specifically this relates to the idea that God has already elected certain souls for salvation
predetermined	Something determined in advance
predicate	Quality or characteristic of an object or entity
prior cause	Relating to the concept of determinism, in that all events are the results of some ‘prior cause’, usually factors such as environment and heredity
proportion/attribution	Aquinas’ division of analogical language about God; analogy of ‘proportion’ means that attributes of God are proportional to God’s nature in the same way as attributes of humans are proportional to their nature; analogy of ‘attribution’ means that attributes of humans are derived from and reflect attributes of God

proposition/al / non-propositional

Different forms of revelation; 'propositional' being revelation through supernatural means (such as special experiences and sacred writings) conveying authoritative truths; 'non-propositional' being revelation through general or natural means (such as ordinary experiences of Nature and human history) using human reason to work out truths

Ramsey

Ian Ramsey, 20th Century English philosopher and, later, Bishop of Durham who provided his 'models and qualifiers' theory as a meaningful way to talk about God

rational

Having or exercising the ability to reason

reason

Logical and analytical human thinking process.

reincarnation/rebirth

Transmigration of an individual soul or consciousness after death to another earthly body or living thing

religious-specific terminology

Terms which are specific within the realm of religion. These may be words which are used as part of the religious experience; paradigm or study

responding-to

A way of experiencing faith in terms of how the individual reacts

resurrection/reanimation

Continuance of an individual after death in a new spiritual or transfigured body in another sphere of life

revelation

Disclosure of God's nature, purposes and truths

Russell

Bertrand Russell, Welsh 20th Century philosopher widely known for his dismissal of religion as unhelpful and even potentially harmful. He expressed concern over existential statements within the ontological argument. Russell did not deny the existence of abstract objects; what he denied was the necessary existence of abstract objects

scientific world view

View that the universe is a machine and that truth is discovered only by scientific enquiry and logical reasoning based on empirical evidence

seeing-as

Wittgenstein coined the phrase 'seeing-as' to suggest that truly seeing something requires mental organisation, selecting what is significant from what is trivial, collating memories, and a host of other activities that make the act of seeing a partnership between the one who sees and the object that is seen. 'Seeing-as' is another phrase for mindful experience

Smilansky

Saul Smilansky, contemporary philosopher who regards free will as an illusion, favouring determinism

Stace

Walter T Stace, contemporary philosopher, who argues for the view of compatibilism

Stannard	Russell Stannard, contemporary British scientist, who has carried out research in the field of high energy nuclear physics for most of his academic life. He has used his work in this field to help bring a greater understanding between science and religion for which he was awarded the Templeton Project Trust Award in 1986
Strawson	Galen Strawson, contemporary English philosopher, who believes that no-one is ever ultimately morally responsible for their actions and that, therefore, free-will is impossible
Swinburne	Richard Swinburne, contemporary British philosopher and Christian apologist. Used his <i>Toys in the Cupboard</i> parable as a means of challenging the falsification principle
symbolic	Something that represents another thing; something which points to a metaphysical reality yet contains within itself meaning and significance
synthetic	A statement is synthetic when the predicate is not included in the subject; its truth can only be determined by observation or experience
Tennant	FR Tennant held a voluntarist view of faith as one that could be reached via empirical means
theory	A set of statements or principles devised to explain a group of facts or phenomena, especially one that has been repeatedly tested or is widely accepted and can be used to make predictions about natural phenomena
Tillich	Paul Tillich, 20 th Century philosopher who held a voluntarist view of faith, coined the term 'correlation' to explain that the contents of the Christian faith can be accessed through existential questions and theological answers in mutual interdependence
Toys in the Cupboard	Swinburne's parable to illustrate an argument contra to the falsification principle
univocal	In language terms this refers to the use of the same word in different contexts having the same meaning, eg Cardiff is a city, Kathmandu is a city – we understand the use of the word city in both cases, although the contexts are different
verification principle	Something is meaningful only if it can be proved through empirical evidence
Vienna Circle	The Vienna Circle was a group of early 20 th century philosophers who sought to re-conceptualise empiricism, by making use of the recent advances in the physical and formal sciences. They met in Vienna (hence the name) under the nominal guidance of Moritz Schlick

violation of the laws of nature

David Hume's phrase used in the definition of what could be considered a miracle. Hume did not state that miracles could not happen but that, due to this violation factor (amongst other reasons), it would be impossible to ever prove that one had happened

voluntarist theories of faith

Term applied to theories about the nature of faith which emphasise the part played by the human will and self-commitment

Wittgenstein

20th century philosopher, originally championed logical positivism, later rejected this field of enquiry as flawed. His use of 'language games' contributes towards an understanding of the meaningfulness of religious language within society

RS3 BS: Studies in Biblical Studies (A2)**SECTION A: Studies in the Old Testament (A2)**

acted parables	Symbolic actions
allegory	Story in which the meaning or message is represented symbolically.
Amos	(Prophesied circa 750 BCE); a sheep breeder and fruit farmer of Tekoa; the earliest canonical prophet
anthropomorphic	In the likeness of a human being; with human characteristics; term used in describing the concept of God held by some biblical writers.
Apocrypha	Group of important Jewish writings not universally regarded as belonging to the authentic canon of the Old Testament.
authorial intention	Allowing the text to convey the author's values and world view; often referred to as the 'implied author' in narrative criticism.
blueprint	A document which is a plan or model
community	A group of people living together with a common religion and sense of values
compilation theories	Ideas as to how a document comes to be in its present form.
concept of God	Idea or mental picture of what God is like.
conscience of the nation	Showing the nation a sense of moral right and wrong
covenant	Binding agreement between two parties based on promises and obligations; Jeremiah's 'new covenant' mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31-34 is new in that the covenant is inward, universal, individual and clearly unconditional.
Creator	Concept of God as maker of the universe and giver of life
credible	Something that can be believed
critical methods	Ways of analysing, explaining and codifying (the text of the Old Testament) without prior acceptance of traditional religious assumptions.
critique	Critical analysis
cult	System of religious worship, especially as expressed in ritual
Deliverer	Concept of God as the one who frees, rescues and saves his people
divinely inspired	Brought into being by the Spirit of God

doom	Death, destruction, or a terrible fate
engagement	Being involved in something
evolutionary understanding	Awareness and perception of developing change or progression.
evolved perception	An understanding that has developed gradually
Exodus	The Hebrew departure from Egyptian slavery, dated variously between the mid-16 th century BCE and the mid-13 th century BCE
Ezekiel	A prophet who preached during the Babylonian Exile circa 587-520 BCE
form criticism	Identification and classification of types of literature within the biblical text based on determining the oral background or original setting (<i>Sitz im Leben</i>) of different portions of text.
four-source theory	Idea that four distinct sources (known as J, E, P and D) constitute the written Pentateuch.
future hope	The confident expectation that things will get better over time
Genesis	The first book of the Bible, giving an account of creation and the first inhabitants of the earth
historical-grammatical exegesis	An explanation of a text based on a study of history and grammar
Holy One	Isaiah's special term for God; emphasises the transcendence of God, who is separate and set apart from all other beings.
Hosea	(Prophesied circa 750-725 BCE); son of Beerai and wife of Gomer; marriage mirrored relationship between God and Israel.
idolatry	Worship of images; often used in the Old Testament to indicate the worship of gods other than Yahweh.
immanent	Indwelling and permanently pervading; God present in and involved with life on earth and the universe
individual responsibility	The state of being called to account for one's own actions.
infinite	Without limitations of time, space or power.
integrity of the text	The wholeness, unity or trustworthiness of a written work
Isaiah	A prophetic book in the Old Testament; it is generally accepted that the book is made up of three different strands: (i) the work of First Isaiah, who prophesied in Jerusalem in the 8 th century BCE; (ii) the work of Second Isaiah, who prophesied during the Exile; (iii) the work of a number of prophets who wrote after the return to Jerusalem circa 520 BCE, gathered together under the title 'Third Isaiah'

Jeremiah	(Prophesied circa 626-586 BCE); son of Hilkiah, a priest.
Joshua	Moses' successor as leader of the Hebrew people; the name of the sixth book in the Old Testament
judge	Concept of God as dispenser of justice, punishing failure to observe covenant law and moral breakdown, rewarding obedience and faithfulness and showing mercy.
legacy	A situation that exists because of past events or actions
literary characteristics	Features that are typical of a particular written work
literary criticism	Attempt to identify and reconstruct sources from which the biblical text is derived.
manuscript	A handwritten document
Masoretic text	The oldest extant edition of the Hebrew Bible, finalised in Tiberias in the 9th century CE
messianic expectation	Hope of imminent arrival of divine deliverer or liberator of Jewish people.
monarchy	State headed by supreme ruler called king
monotheism	Belief in one God.
ministry	The work or office of a minister of religion, priest or prophet
Mosaic	Of or associated with Moses
nabi (plural nebi'im)	Originally referred to early Israelite ecstatic prophet but is also the Hebrew term used for a canonical prophet such as Amos or Jeremiah.
narrative criticism	Form of textual criticism that regards a narrative work (such as <i>Genesis</i>) as a complete and self-consistent unit in itself; interprets the text from the perspective of the 'implied author' and 'implied reader'.
new covenant	The Old Testament refers to four covenants (with Noah, Abraham, Moses and David); the prophet Jeremiah called for a 'new covenant' to be written, not on stone tablets like the covenant with Moses, but on people's hearts
new Jerusalem	A vision of a transformed Jerusalem, the Jewish capital
omnipotent	All-powerful
Pentateuch	The first five books of the Old Testament
predictive element	Relating to the foretelling of the future
prophecy	Proclamation conveying alleged communication from a deity concerning contemporary society and often regarding coming punishment or deliverance.

Psalms	A religious song or hymn; the Book of Psalms contains 150 such songs, most of which are believed to have been written for use in Temple worship between the 10th and the 6th centuries BCE
reader response	Accepting the dynamics and value system of the text and believing and seeking to know everything the text assumes readers know and believe; often referred to as the 'implied reader' in narrative criticism
redaction criticism	Study of editorial effect on final form of text involving search for the distinctive viewpoint or intention of the editor and analysis of his use of source material.
resurrection	The reversal of physical death and restoration of life; [many Old Testament passages allude to the continued survival of the dead but only one contains an explicit and clear statement of belief in a resurrection (Daniel 12 ²)].
ro'eh	Early Israelite prophet often associated with the cult and sanctuaries of ancient Israel or royal court; seer.
Septuagint	The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible produced in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE, so called because of the tradition that it was prepared by 72 translators (Latin <i>septuaginta</i> = seventy)
Sheol	Name of dwelling place of the dead.
source criticism	See <i>literary criticism</i> above.
Temple	Building in Jerusalem symbolising the presence of Yahweh and used for worship and celebration of annual feasts; central place of cultic sacrifice
Temple cult	The system of religious worship, and its staff, that operated in the Temple in Jerusalem during the period of the monarchy
textual criticism	A study of the text of a written work
textual reconstruction	The editing of a text to supply missing words and/or to amend difficult words so that the meaning is more intelligible
transcendent	Apart from, beyond and outside life on earth and the universe.
version (of the Bible)	A particular form or edition of the Bible
Vulgate	The main Latin version of the Bible, prepared in the 4th cent CE
Yahweh	Probable pronunciation of the sacred personal divine name YHWH; name derived from the verb 'to be' meaning 'he is', 'he will be' or 'he causes to be' (<i>i.e.</i> the Creator).

SECTION B: Studies in the New Testament (A2)

1 & 2 Corinthians	Two letters written by Paul to the church at Corinth
1 Timothy	One of two letters written by Paul to Timothy, one of his assistants
1st century church	See <i>Early Christian community/church</i> below
Acts	The Acts of the Apostles, a book written circa 60-100 CE by the author of Luke's Gospel, telling the story of the early Church
Ananias and Sapphira	Two members of the early church who withheld a part of the proceeds of a sale from the apostles, and who apparently died of guilt
apostleship	The state of being an apostle, a title given to Jesus' disciples after his resurrection; Paul too describes himself as an apostle (I Corinthians 15:8-9), because the risen Jesus had appeared to him.
authorship	The identification of who actually composed any particular text. Many New Testament texts are said to have been written by a particular author, but closer examination reveals that in many cases such designation is at best ambiguous. Evidence might be sought from within the texts themselves, from other texts, and from external sources. The ability to identify the author is a prerequisite for determining authorial intention. A distinction has to be drawn between the source of the individual components of the texts, and the final compiler/redactor.
autocratic	Relating to a ruler who has total power and who insists on complete obedience from others
bishop	A senior member of the Christian clergy, usually in charge of a diocese – a group of parishes within a geographical area; from Greek <i>episkopos</i> = overseer
breaking of bread	The climax of the eucharist; bread is broken to signify the broken body of Christ on the cross.
casting of lots	Deciding something by choosing an item at random, e.g. a piece of stick from a number of sticks
charismata	Special gifts given by God
charismatic endowment (charisma, charismatic)	A set of terms especially associated with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In medieval theology, the term 'charisma' is used to designate a spiritual gift, conferred upon individuals by the grace of God. Since the early twentieth century, the term 'charismatic' has come to refer to styles of theology and worship which place particular emphasis upon the immediate presence and experience of the Holy Spirit.

Christological	Relating to Christology, a study of the Person of Jesus – who he was and how we should understand him
church	Community of Christian believers that came together in various places as a result of the missionary activity of the earliest Christians. Thought to prefigure the Kingdom of God, the place where God exercised kingly rule on earth. Within the documents of the New Testament one can discern the development of a structured and organised Church during the 1 st and 2 nd centuries.
commentary	A text written to explain and interpret the actual New Testament texts, usually structured in a verse by verse format, but will also contain discussion of date, authorship, and readership. Commentaries have been written regularly throughout the history of Christianity, and will often differ in views and opinions. Different critical methods of enquiry will have been employed depending on the date of the writing of the commentary, and the theological context of the author.
communal life	A way of life shared by all members of a community
compatible	Consistent, in keeping, well-suited; e.g. ‘black is compatible with any colour’
composition	Can refer either to the final form of the text, or the process of bringing together the final form of the text.
Cornelius	A centurion at Caesarea, baptized by Peter (Acts 10); the event opened the door to the baptism of Gentiles
Council at/of Jerusalem	A conference of the Christian Apostles in Jerusalem in about 50 CE which decreed that Gentile Christians did not have to observe the Mosaic Law of the Jews
critical methods	Strategies that allow scholars to study the New Testament texts in order to answer such questions as date and place of writing, author, intended audience, theological perspective. Allows similarities and differences to be identified between the individual documents of the New Testament and between New Testament documents and other contemporary documents. Will enquire into sources, literary style, language, vocabulary, final structure etc.
crucifixion	Execution by nailing to a cross
deacon	A minister ranking below a priest; from Greek <i>diakonos</i> =servant
death	Straightforwardly, the end of physical existence. However, within the New Testament there are two further perspectives that are developed. There is the idea of a ‘second’ death—the ultimate destruction of those condemned at the final judgement. There is also the idea that prior to becoming a Christian an individual is ‘dead in sin’. When one becomes a Christian, one is ‘made alive in Christ’—a spiritual experiencing of that demonstrated physically in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

democratic	Based on the principle of democracy, i.e. that all members of society are equal
destination	Might be a geographical location, e.g. Paul's journeys. Could also refer to the location of the churches to which some of the New Testament is addressed, e.g. Corinth, Ephesus, etc.
discipline	Controlled behaviour; obedience to a code of rules
divorce	The legal ending of a marriage
early Christian community / Church	The society of those who believed in Jesus as described in the New Testament
Easter faith	A way of referring to the Christian religion, which came into being as the result of events experienced by the followers of Jesus over the Easter period when he was crucified and resurrected. The Easter faith is primarily a belief in the resurrection.
Ephesians	A letter written by Paul to the church at Ephesus
epistles	Those texts in the New Testament assumed to have been written in letter form, i.e. directed to be read by a particular group or individual. These include all texts attributed to Paul, the 'anonymous' epistle to the Hebrews, the 'letter' of James, the 'letters' of Peter, the 'letters' of John, and the 'letter' of Jude. There are other letters within other New Testament texts—e.g. the letters to the churches found in the Book of the Revelation.
ethics / ethical	System according to which questions of right and wrong are determined. Christian ethics is a system whereby such questions are answered according to the teachings of Jesus, the New Testament, and the Church. New Testament ethics is not so systematic, rather it identifies within the New Testament examples of ethical decision making, and then has to determine according to what ethical system such decisions came to be made. One key question is whether the New Testament pronouncements on such matters have any contemporary relevance; if so, why?; if not, why not?
forgiveness	The act of an aggrieved party towards a perpetrator according to which the grievance is removed, allowing the parties to be reconciled to each other. Usually discussed in relation to God and humankind—the forgiving of sin. Has its origins in Jewish sacrificial system—atonement. Jesus' death is often understood as an 'atoning sacrifice'. Believing that Jesus died for sin allows the believer to experience forgiveness from God.
Galatians	A letter written by Paul to the church in Galatia
Gamaliel	A leading authority in the Sanhedrin (the Council of the Jews) in the mid first century and, in Christian tradition, the teacher of Paul the apostle

Gentile	Strictly any non-Jew, as far as a Jew is concerned. Sometimes in the New Testament the term 'Greek' might be used. Possible ambiguity surrounds the designation of 'Samaritans'. Gentiles became able to enter the Christian Church directly without having to convert to Judaism first, following the pronouncements of the Council of Jerusalem recorded in Acts 15, though Paul's letter to the Galatians suggests that things did not always go smoothly. Direct admission of gentiles required a modification of the way the 'Law' of the Old Testament was perceived as between Jew and non-Jew. See Romans 1-4.
Gospels	The first four books of the New Testament. The 'Good News'. Purported biographies of Jesus. Other 'gospels' were in circulation in the early Church but only the four were accepted into the canon. 'The Gospel' is a phrase used in evangelical theology to describe preaching a particular, 'bible based' interpretation of the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection.
Great Commission	Jesus' final command to his disciples after his resurrection – to go and baptize all the nations of the world; see Matthew 28:19-20 and parallels
Heaven	Traditionally created by God, the ultimate destination of the faithful. The place where God exercises his Kingly rule. Was set within a three tiered creation—Heaven, Earth, Hell. Following physical death, it was believed that one went either to Heaven or Hell dependent on the relationship established with God during one's earthly life. Thought by some to be prefigured in the Church. An extreme view would equate Heaven with Church.
Hell	An element of Divine creation. Following death, the destination of all who have denied God. A place of eternal punishment. Modelled on Gehenna, the rubbish tip outside Jerusalem that is always burning. Some believe it was created as the final destination of the Devil and his angels/followers.
Holy Spirit	The third Person of the Godhead; God as active in the world
Jerusalem	The capital city of the Jews
Judaism	The religion of the Jews
Judaizers	In the history of the Christian religion, those who insisted that converts to Christianity should first accept Judaism
Judas	The disciple who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver
judgement	Traditionally understood within Judaeo/Christian eschatology as that which God carries out on the 'last day' when the eternal destiny of each individual is determined—Heaven or Hell. Often referred to as the 'last' or 'final' judgement.
koinonia	A Greek word that means partnership, fellowship or community, frequently used in the New Testament for the early Christian Church; the term embraces the celebration of the Lord's Supper, e.g. in I Corinthians 10:16, where the English word 'communion' translates the Greek <i>koinonia</i>

Law	Within the theological discussions of the New Testament, the law is the Mosaic Law, given by God to his people to regulate their conduct in order to keep the people in a proper relationship with God. The coming of Christ heralded the period of grace whereby all that was required in order to be in such a relationship was belief, or faith, that Jesus was/is the way of inaugurating such a relationship. The issue for Jewish converts, then, was what if any relevance does the law have? Paul deals this with in his letters to the Galatians and the Romans. There was/is also the issue of the relevance of this (Jewish) law to Gentile converts to Christianity.
leadership (Church)	Patterns that evolved within the early Christian communities. Some are in terms of office, e.g. bishop (episcopos), elder (presbuteros), and deacon (diakonos). Others are in terms of function, e.g. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. There is also evidence within the texts that as the communities became established, both office and function were to change, even though the same title might be employed.
legalistically prescriptive	Enforced by a practice of keeping strictly to the law
life	Straightforwardly, physical existence, the time between birth and death. The New Testament also speaks of eternal life and of immortality. It talks too of spiritual life, life in Christ, being born again/anew/from above. The sacrament of baptism/ordnance came to mark the beginning of 'life'. There is also reference to resurrection life, life after death.
Lord	The saying 'Jesus is Lord' serves as a statement of faith for Christians who regard Jesus as both fully man and fully God.
Luke	The author of the third gospel and the Book of Acts
Mark	The author of the second gospel; chronologically, however, it is generally accepted that his gospel was the first
marriage	The formal union of a man and a woman by which they become husband and wife
Matthaeian exception clause	The clause in Matthew 5:32 which appears to condone divorce when a wife has committed adultery, and which is absent from parallel passages in Mark and Luke
Matthew	The author of the first gospel; however, it is generally accepted that he borrowed much from Mark, and that Mark's gospel was written first
Messiah	Hebrew for 'anointed'; in the Old Testament it was used for the Israelite king; later it came to denote the long-awaited Saviour of Israel; New Testament writers are convinced that the Messiah is Jesus of Nazareth
miracles	Actions that contravene the laws of nature and that are considered to be the work of God

mission	The work carried out by a religion to spread its faith
missionary imperative	The commission of the Early Church to spread the ‘good news’ as far as they could. Examples are Matthew 28 and Acts 1. An interesting variation is found in John 20. Throughout the New Testament period, such missionary activity was at the heart of the church’s activities.
observance (Church)	See <i>structure</i> (Church)
organisation	The way in which a movement is ordered or arranged
Paul/Pauline	Adjective used to describe the letters of the New Testament attributed to Paul. This does not mean that all such texts were actually written by Paul. Can also be used to describe theological concepts and ideas that are thought to have originated within the literature that bears Paul’s name. Has been used as a simple description of a way of understanding emerging Christian theology as opposed to Johannine theology, a set of ideas based on documents attributed to the author John
Pentecost event	The event that occurred on the first Christian Pentecost, i.e. the coming of the Holy Spirit to Jesus’ disciples; this happened on the Jewish festival of Pentecost, held on the fiftieth day after the second day of Passover; from Greek <i>pentēkostē</i> = fiftieth.
Persecution	The systematic mistreatment of a person or group by another group. The persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire in New Testament times begins with Nero (37-68)
person and work of Jesus	Who Jesus was (fully God/ fully man), and what he did, both in his public ministry and as Saviour of humankind
Peter	One of Jesus’ original twelve disciples who was assigned a leadership role by Jesus (Matthew 12:17-19 and parallels)
prayer	The act of verbal communication with God for the purpose of worshipping or seeking guidance
pre-eminence	Superiority to; above all others
preaching	In Christian tradition, proclaiming the gospel (good news) of Jesus; delivering a sermon
presbyter	A local Christian leader; Its literal meaning in Greek (<i>presbyteros</i>) is elder
resurrection	The description of what happened to Jesus after he had been placed in the tomb following his crucifixion. This was a physical resurrection—resurrection of the body. Belief in such a resurrection was held by the Jews as part of their eschatological perspective: the resurrection on the last day. Everyone who dies will experience such a resurrection prior to the judgement of God. Has also come to be used to describe a conversion experience, a spiritual resurrection. Realised eschatology accepts the latter but not the former. However, it is possible to believe in either or both. Major creeds still affirm belief in the ‘resurrection of the body’.
Romans	A letter written by Paul to the church in Rome

sermon	An address on a religious or moral subject
sin	Disobeying God. ‘Original Sin’ is alleged to have entered the realm of human existence when Eve and then Adam succumbed to the temptation of the serpent in the Garden of Eden. It is believed by some to be part of the natural condition of all human beings. Others understand it to be those thoughts and actions that are contrary to the will and purpose of God for the person concerned and the world as a whole. At the heart of Christian Theology is the belief that in some way Jesus’ death secured forgiveness from sin, making it possible for those who so believe to live within the will and purpose of God.
Solomon’s Portico	The covered way running along the eastern wall in the Court of the Gentiles of Herod’s temple. It was the scene of Christ’s teaching in John 10:23, and the healing of the lame man in Acts 3:11. The apostles preached and performed miracles there (Acts 5:12)
Son of David	One of the titles attributed to Jesus. Christians believe that he was the promised Messiah. The Hebrew word <i>messiah</i> means ‘anointed’. In Israelite history it was customary to anoint kings. The Jerusalem kings were all descended from King David. Therefore, the new ‘anointed one’, Jesus, was also of the seed of David. Matthew 1 and Luke 3 give genealogical testimony that Jesus was a direct descendant of David through Joseph. Thus Jesus was ‘the Son of God’ in both a spiritual and physical sense
Son of God	In Christian tradition, the term refers to the relationship between Jesus and God; in the Old Testament, it is used in several different ways.
spiritual gifts	Gifts that are supernaturally bestowed on Christians to strengthen the church. They are described in I Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4, and include prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, showing mercy, diverse tongues, interpretation of tongues
structure (Church)	In terms of the New Testament, those examples of the way the early Christian communities organised themselves in terms of personnel and activities. This would be demonstrated in terms of patterns of leadership, the organisation of worship, wider missionary activity.
Suffering Servant	A title of Jesus; the prophecy of Second Isaiah, written during the Babylonian Exile, contains four passages known as the Songs of the Suffering Servant, which have been interpreted by the Christian Church as prophecies of the coming of Jesus, even though they were written many centuries before his birth; passages such as Isaiah 53:5 are taken to refer to the sufferings of Jesus and the absolution of sins. Jewish theologians believe the Servant to be the nation of Israel
theocratic	Relating to a system of government where priests rule in the name of God

theology	Orderly presentation of the ideas which underpin the beliefs that individuals and/or groups might have about God. The New Testament description of the person and work of Christ, together with its various internal interpretive paradigms provides the basis for a Christian Theology. All religions will have their particular theologies. Within Christianity various different theologies can be identified, e.g. Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed, Pentecostalist, etc.
unity	The state of being united or whole

RS3 CHR: Studies in Christianity (A2)

- apostolic succession** The unbroken continuation of practices established within the earliest Christian communities, during the time when the Apostles were still alive, who were themselves responsible for establishing such practices. Usually applied to the ordination of clergy by a bishop, the office of bishop being one that has existed since the apostolic age. The Apostle Peter is traditionally regarded as being the first Bishop of Rome. There is some controversy as to whether this notion of succession applies to office, function, or activity. Is it the activities of the ordained clergy that are crucial regardless of who might carry out the act of ordination? Is it possible for a person functioning as a bishop to ordain another? Is it only a serving bishop that can ordain? This is often discussed within the wider context of the whole area of legitimate authority within the life of the church.
- authority** Possessing the ability to determine the issues that arise within the ongoing life of the Church as regards interpretation, doctrine and practice. It is always thought of as having been established in the New Testament and as such determined by reading the texts. However, many of the issues requiring authoritative determination arise out of competing interpretations of the meaning of particular biblical texts. Therefore there has to be extra-biblical authority, albeit pointed to within the text. Hence the claim that final authority rests within the Church. There is also the issue of the role of the Holy Spirit in such matters, the binding force of any ruling. Many if not all of the divisions that have occurred within the history of the Church have been to do with issues of authority.
- baptism of the Holy Spirit** According to Jesus in Luke 24:49, 'the Promise of the Father', through which believers in Jesus receive 'power from on high'. According to Acts 1:8, Jesus further referred to the baptism with the Holy Spirit as an experience through which his disciples would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them.
- Body of Christ** Can refer to those who are members of the Church, the Church being regarded as a continuing incarnation, enlivened by the presence within of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the risen Christ. Is also used within the liturgy of the Eucharist to describe the bread that is offered. The precise relationship between the bread and the actual body of Christ within the Eucharist is a matter of controversy between the traditions, and involves discussion of the notion of 'real presence', 'consubstantiation', and 'transubstantiation'.
- Boff** Leonardo Boff (b.1938), a Brazilian theologian; one of the first exponents of Liberation Theology, whose past support for communist regimes and recent celebration of the destruction of the World Trade Centre as marking 'a new planetary and humanistic paradigm' has caused controversy.

Bultmann	Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976); a German theologian; the most influential exponent of Form Criticism, best known for his conviction that the narratives of the life of Jesus were offering theology in the language of myth, which should be explained so as to be intelligible today
Catholic	Universal, indivisible, all embracing, comprising every member of the Church from every time and every place. More popularly referred to, post-Reformation, in terms of the Roman Catholic Church; that part of the Church acknowledging the authority of the See of Rome. The Roman Catholic Church itself understood from within as continuing to be universal and indivisible, that with which all others have to unite if they would truly be part of the Church. This has obvious implications for ecumenical relations. In its original creedal form, the term 'catholic' cannot be used apart from the terms 'holy' and 'apostolic'—a body of people separated by God, indivisible in time and space, continuing in unbroken succession from the earliest Christian communities.
Celtic spirituality	A way of expressing Christian beliefs in worship and practice thought to have its roots in the pre-Roman, Celtic peoples, and found in the Christianity of Celtic Britain before the Dark Ages. Has involved a rediscovering of the 'natural' dimension attached to worship. As such it has affinities with emerging 'new-age' traditions, which has led some to be critical of its potential for syncretism. Others see it as a positive development of an inherent spirituality that can serve to complement Christian perspectives, rather than having to import an alien context within which to express new found Christian belief. The Iona Community has been particularly influential in its modern revival.
charismatic renewal	Process within the life of the Church, either as a whole, or particular groups, whereby it is believed that the Holy Spirit reinvigorates the Church's life. This might be accompanied by particular manifestations of speech or behaviour. It might provoke a search for unity or perpetuate division. During the 1960s and 1970s there was a widespread interdenominational movement which developed the 'charismatic' movement or the 'renewal' movement. More recently, and more controversially there has been the phenomenon of the 'Toronto' Blessing and its subsequent impact on large sections of the church. Critics of all such movements see them as a consequence of failing to appreciate the proper role of the Holy Spirit within the unfolding of the purpose of God as described within a 'balanced' Trinitarian perspective. Others see these developments as the inevitable consequence of the overhumanising and therefore the despiritualising of the church in order to preserve the essential sovereignty of God over the affairs of the church.
Christ of faith	A term coined to distinguish between the Jesus of history, and the Christ whom the church proclaims
Christological	Relating to Christology, a study of the Person of Jesus – who he was and how we should understand him

Christology	The understanding of the person and work of Christ within the wider context of emerging Christian Theology. There is Christology ‘from above’ that begins with the assumed Divinity of Christ and proceeds to explain how he might be found in human form. There is Christology ‘from below’ that begins with the human Jesus and proceeds to explain how he might be understood as divine. It will involve issues such as pre-existence, the nature of his birth, Adoptionism, Gnostic and Docetic heresies; the significance of the crucifixion in terms of sacrifice and atonement; messianic fulfilment; resurrection; eschatological perspectives, and many other questions.
debate	A formal, interactive presentation of argument
demythologising	Removing the mythological elements from a text
Communion of Saints	The spiritual solidarity that binds together the faithful on earth and the saints in heaven in one mystical body under Christ, its head; its symbol is the eucharist; the doctrine is based on I Corinthians 12
Charismatic Movement	From the Greek <i>charisma</i> = gift; Christians who believe that the manifestations of the Holy Spirit seen in the New Testament Church (miracles, prophecy, glossolalia) may also be experienced today. Charismatics, unlike Pentecostalists, usually stay in their existing denominations.
charity work	Work that is done voluntarily to help those in need
Christianity in action	Generally, the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the changing of lives through tangible help and leadership for identified needs; practical ways of expressing Christian love and concern
Church	The bringing together of Christians. Traditionally thought of as coming into being at Pentecost—the ‘birthday of the church’. It began as separate communities, inheriting the synagogue concept from the Jews. In time it came to be formalised into a collection of interconnected communities. At the same time it came to be the title given to each of the individual communities. The creeds speak of ‘One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.’ This emphasises its Divine origins, its indivisible nature, and its historical unbrokenness. There is the Church ‘militant’—its actual presence on earth—and the Church ‘triumphant’—the believers in heaven. There is the ‘visible’ church—those actually members of the church—and the ‘invisible’ church—those known only to God who in due time will be added to the church. Denominations are referred to as Churches, though strictly speaking this only applies to those denominations with a central structure, either episcopal or connexional. Baptists speak of a ‘union of Baptist churches’, there is also the ‘Congregational Union’, and the ‘Union of Welsh Independents’. In England and Scotland there is an ‘Established’ Church—the Church of England (Anglican), and the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian). There are ‘house churches’, ‘black churches’, and many others. This merely serves to illustrate how impossible it is to define ‘church’. All one can do is provide examples of its particular use and application.

- One	For the Church to be one with Christ it must first maintain unity with itself.
- Holy	In the creeds, included alongside 'catholic' and 'apostolic', used to convey the belief that the Church is not a human creation, but God's creation. It is established by separating out those who are of God from the world in order that they might be sanctified by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit so that, in time, the members of the Church are made holy. As such it is not limited as are other human institutions, but is universal, indivisible and in unbroken succession from its beginnings.
- Catholic	See under <i>Catholic</i> above
- Apostolic	Indicates that the church is to be understood as having been started immediately after Christ's ascension, during the time of the apostles. It is used within the creeds alongside 'holy' and 'catholic' to indicate that the church is a body of people separated by God, universal and indivisible, in unbroken succession with these earliest Christian communities.
Church structures	The way in which the Church is organised
conversion	Turning from one religion to another—sometimes referred to as proselytisation—or from no religion to a particular religion.
corporate nature	Of a kind that belongs to an united group of people
creedal base	A basis in the historic creeds of Christianity
denomination	The title given to various groups within the Christian Church, which, while they remain united as regards the basis of beliefs, differ in terms of detailed understanding of particular doctrines and practices. It is usually understood that there are three traditions within Christianity—Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant or Reformed. Within each tradition there are various denominations, e.g. Church of England, Church in Wales, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal. There are also movements within the Church which claim to be either non-denominational or inter-denominational, e.g. charismatic, evangelical. Sometimes such movements become institutionalised to such an extent they are unrecognisable from denominations e.g. The Evangelical Movement of Wales.
divine constitution	Set up by God
Ebeling	Gerhard Ebeling (1912-2001), a disciple of Rudolf Bultmann and a prominent figure in the New Quest for the Historical Jesus
ecclesiastical activity	Things that are done in church or in its name

ecstatic behaviour	Particular unnatural or non-natural behaviour manifest directly as a result of having been directed by the Holy Spirit, usually confirmed as such by the nature of the behaviour itself, e.g. speaking in tongues. Other religions will also point to similar types of behaviour patterns as a result of spiritual possession. Can also be 'evil'—a product of alleged demon possession.
Ecumenical Movement	Developed in the 20 th century, intended to bring the various denominations and traditions within the Christian Church together. Led to the establishing of the World Council of Churches, which does facilitate dialogue between the groups. Intention is to foster co-operative out-working of faith, whilst engaging in inter-denominational and inter-tradition discussions concerning those aspects of doctrine that caused division to be created. Can be seen at the local level where individual churches and congregations in a community will co-operate, and in some instances unite. The full participation of the Roman Catholic Church in the process has caused controversy for some, whilst being a great encouragement to others.
episcopal hierarchy	A system of clergy members one ranked above the other under a bishop
eternal life	What is said to be the state of existence enjoyed by any who has come to 'know God as revealed in Jesus Christ'—John 17:1. Is it qualitative or quantitative? How do eternal and immortal relate? Does it necessarily imply post-mortem existence, or is it 'merely' a state of grace in this life?
evangelism	The preaching of the gospel to win converts
experience (religious)	The physical, psychological, emotional and intellectual effect of having been allegedly encountered by God. Not all so-called religious experiences are in fact religious experiences when investigated, but many claimed experiences do remain unexplainable according to rational criteria. By definition they tend to be unprovable, and therefore incapable of being established in terms of truth or fact.
fair trade	A market-based model of international trade which promotes a fair payment and good social and environmental standards in relation to a wide variety of exports from developing countries, with the aim of securing the producers' self-sufficiency
faith community	A community of people who follow the same religion
Feminist Theology	A way of articulating theology that emerged from within the wider feminist movement that developed from the 1960s onwards. Just as a male oriented, male dominated society was being questioned by women, so was the Church and the doctrines that underpin the Church's existence. Some feminist writers have concluded that Christianity is irredeemable while others have argued that it is capable of being changed. Questions asked include: those to do with gender presuppositions regarding God; the validity of the ordination of women; the confronting of hierarchies. Feminist theology might be thought of as one of a number of 'liberating' theologies serving to emancipate an otherwise oppressed group within society.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth	Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (b. 1938); a leading feminist theologian; her best-known book is <i>In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins</i> , 1984, which argues for the retrieval of the overlooked contribution of women in the early Christian Church
fundamentalism	Unquestioned and unquestioning allegiance to a body of doctrine, the content of sacred texts, and/or the pronouncements of religious leaders. Not limited to Christianity, but within Christianity is usually linked to a belief in the literal truth of the biblical text.
gifts of the Spirit	Gifts that are supernaturally bestowed on Christians to strengthen the church. They are described in I Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4, and include prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, showing mercy, diverse tongues, interpretation of tongues
God's saving action	What God has done and is still doing to free humans from sin, sorrow, sickness, death, and the powers of evil
Gutierrez	Gustavo Gutierrez (b. 1928); a Peruvian theologian, regarded as the founder of Liberation Theology, who has argued that true 'liberation' involves political and social freedom, the emancipation of the poor, and a liberation from selfishness and sin, which re-establishes a relationship with God. His work has been the subject of repeated papal scrutiny.
healing	Within the religious context, the restoration or improvement of physical, mental or spiritual health brought about by supernatural intervention, usually understood as Divine. There are also instances of people believing themselves to possess a 'gift' of healing, given by God. Establishing the actual veracity of such healings often provokes great controversy, with differing opinions being put forward. There is a section of the church that believes that divine healing was limited to the time of Christ for him to be able to signify through mighty works his divinity. Some claim that illness is a product of sin or a lack of faith, and that therefore physical healing will be the consequence of true repentance.
incarnation	Becoming flesh; a word used to signify how God became human in the Person of Jesus
interpreter of scripture	Someone or something that explains the Bible
Jesus of history/historical Jesus	The Jesus who lived on earth twenty centuries ago and whose life and work is described in the New Testament, as opposed to the Christ proclaimed by the Christian Church

Johnson, Elizabeth	A feminist theologian; her book, <i>She who is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse</i> , 1992, emphasises the ‘underdeveloped’ feminine images of God, while her <i>Truly our Sister, A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints</i> , 2003, interprets Mary as a champion of the oppressed
Käsemann	Ernst Käsemann (1906-1998), a Lutheran theologian, best-known for his involvement in the Second Quest for the Historical Jesus; he argued that what is historically reliable about Jesus is limited to the gospel material that is not plausible in a C1st Jewish or Christian context and is attested in more than one tradition
Latin America	The region of the Americas where languages derived from Latin (particularly Spanish and Portuguese), are primarily spoken, as opposed to that where English predominates
lay / laity	Those members who have not been ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament (<i>i.e.</i> those who are not the clergy). Some denominations do not acknowledge such a clergy/laity distinction, concentrating on issues of function as opposed to office
Liberation Theology	Broad term covering a variety of particular developments in Christian theology, all of which are united by a common intention of challenging the political and theological status quo in order to ‘liberate’ those who are felt to be restricted by the existing structures. Its origins can be traced to Latin America in the 1960s within the Roman Catholic Church, though some Protestants were involved. It involved integrating a Marxist analysis with a Christian theological solution. It took the Exodus motif as a theological paradigm. This in turn was subsumed into a particular approach to Christology that emphasised solidarity in living and dying and liberation through resurrection. It draws on the stories of particular oppressed individuals, and uses them to confront structures. It challenges the church to confront society rather than be constrained by it. Other ‘liberation’ theologies have emerged in South Africa, amongst black Americans and some Asian peoples. It has also informed feminist theology.
liturgical	Relating to liturgy, <i>i.e.</i> the order for an act of public worship
liturgical responsibilities	Having an obligation to lead an act of worship
Logos	Greek for ‘Word’; Jewish philosophers used the term to denote God in action; Greek philosophers used it to denote the life principle in the world; John taught that Jesus was the Logos, the Word of God
mediator	A person who reconciles two parties who are at variance
Messianic Inaugurator of the Kingdom of God	Jesus (the Messiah) as the one who initiates God’s rule on earth

ministry	The regular and disciplined conduct of the Church in terms of those activities that are required of the Church if it is to be Church—essentially preaching the Word, administering the sacraments, giving pastoral care and leadership. The root idea is of serving. Can be used to describe the work of the ordained clergy or ‘ministers’, or may refer to the work of lay members (e.g. visiting the sick.). It conveys a sense of responsibility: the Church through appointed officers and designated functions is responsible for ensuring the fidelity of the people of God to the work to which they are called
mission	The activity of the Church and its members, either corporately or individually, in sharing with the world the purposes of God as revealed in and through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is not just about converting people to Christianity; rather it is about living Christianly. It encourages the Church to be at the disposal of others, serving others rather than being self-serving.
moral guardian	Someone who protects or preserves one’s conformity to the rules of good conduct
myth	A story involving supernatural persons or events. May purport to be factual, may be entirely fictional. What is important is what the story teaches about the supernatural entity in question. Some Bible stories are written in this way. This might be because their authors did not possess enough knowledge to realise that the events described could be explained in purely natural terms. However there is also a positive approach that is fully aware of any potential natural explanation for the events concerned but which still invokes supernatural involvement. The key fact is that the story or event is illustrative of a greater ‘truth’ and as such should not be read as an end in itself. Such myths are usually acted out in the rituals of the religious communities, those rituals providing the vehicle for the retelling of the stories, and their application to a contemporary audience.
mythological	Relating to myth, i.e. a story conveying truth through symbolism; often a story about God’s activity, or human encounter with the supernatural
New Adam	Paul’s idea of Christ (I Corinthians 15:22, 45) restoring humankind to its original relationship with God that had been lost through Adam’s sin (Genesis 3)
New Moses	The Moses typology in the portrayal of Jesus, particularly in the birth narrative in Matthew
new theologies	Recent presentation of fresh ideas to underpin Christian beliefs
ordained	Conferred with authority as a Christian priest or minister
ordination	The act of setting apart an individual to hold a particular office or exercise a particular function within the church. Traditionally focused on the ministry of word and sacrament but now may be applied to any office or function designated by the church as appropriate for ordination. The actual procedure for ordination

will differ between the various traditions and denominations of the church, and it is not always that a person ordained within one tradition will be accepted as ‘properly’ ordained by other traditions. This will not necessarily reflect on the individual concerned but more the theological context within which the act of ordination was carried out.

Orthodox	Conforming to the Christian faith as represented in the creeds of the early Church, or pertaining to the Eastern Orthodox Church
overseas mission	Christian work carried out in foreign lands, especially in Third World countries, to establish schools, hospitals etc
pastoral	Relating to the duties of a Christian minister, particularly in leading and caring for the people
patriarchal structures	Social arrangements that defer to elderly men
Pentecostalism	A Christian movement which emphasises the gifts of the Holy Spirit, e.g. prophecy, healing and speaking in tongues
Person of Christ	<i>See Christology</i>
priesthood	Has its origins in the office of the Old Testament priests: those appointed to represent the people before God in terms of performing the rituals necessary to preserve the people in proper relationship with God. The Letter to the Hebrews sees Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament priesthood. He is one who is forever interceding before God on behalf of humankind. Therefore within the Christian Church, those who would be priests are representatives of the priestly function exercised by Christ. They represent the people before God and represent God before the people. They officiate at rituals; they pronounce forgiveness in the name of Christ. They preserve the mysteries of faith in and through which the continuing priestly work of Christ is evidenced. Some traditions will refer to clergy as priests; others see the priestly function as an element within a wider ministry, which also embraces the role of prophet and king, representing the three-fold ministry of Christ. The Old Testament saw prophet, priest and king as three separate distinct offices. In Christ they are brought together, and in the Church they continue to be represented by his people.
- of all believers	The Lutheran doctrine that all baptized Christians are ‘priests’ in the sight of God
Protestant	Relating to <i>Protestantism</i> (see below)
Protestantism	The movement within the church that developed as a consequence of the Reformation. It is an ‘umbrella’ term covering a variety of groups and organisations, e.g. the Lutherans (those who followed the teachings of Luther), the Reformed movement that inherited the teachings of Calvin, the Radicals or Anabaptists of Zurich. Subsequently Protestantism has become even more diffuse; e.g. the emergence of separatist, non-conformist and dissenting groups. The best

definition of Protestant might well be 'not Roman Catholic, and not Orthodox'. However, it may be that some groups that would come under such a description would not ordinarily call themselves Protestant, e.g. Pentecostals. It may be that this term is now of little more than historical interest and that nothing is served by trying to use it in any generic sense.

quest for the historical Jesus

The attempt to use historical rather than religious methods to construct a verifiable biography of Jesus.

ritual specialist

One who is an authority on the prescribed procedure for an act of religious worship

Romero

Oscar Romero (1917-1980); Catholic Archbishop of San Salvador; he embraced a non-violent form of Liberation Theology, and was assassinated on the orders of the military on 24 March 1980 while celebrating Mass

Ruether, Rosemary Radford

(b. 1936); a distinguished feminist theologian who has argued for the recovery of God/ess as Primal Matrix, the womb in which all things are generated

salvation

Within Christian theology, the work of Christ in providing the means whereby humankind can be reconciled to God and enjoy the benefits of such a relationship rather than suffer the consequences of sin. This is salvation—being saved from sin, judgement, punishment and condemnation, all of which are seen to be represented in the crucifixion of Jesus. The crucifixion may be viewed as an act of atonement in which Jesus is substituted for sinful humanity, sacrificing himself on behalf of all. There are many and various ways in which this 'drama' of salvation has come to be understood within Christian history. This 'drama' is central to the worship of the Church and is represented in various ways through Baptism and Eucharist.

Saviour

One who saves, rescues or delivers; in Christian tradition, a title of God, and especially of Jesus

sign and instrument

The idea that the Church is both a prophetic *sign* pointing beyond itself to the fulfilment of the kingdom of God, and also an *instrument* in that its members are sent as Christ's disciples to proclaim the Good News in word and deed, that the world may believe.

Sobrino

Jon Sobrino (b. 1938); a Basque Liberation Theologian and Jesuit priest who, having been sent to El Salvador in 1958, subsequently identified with the suffering of Third World dwellers. His works include *Jesus the Liberator*, 1991, *Christ the Liberator*, 1999, *Christology at the Crossroads*, 1978, *The True Church and the Poor*, 1984, and *Spirituality of Liberation*, 1990. He concentrates on the social context of Jesus' life and his radical ministry, emphasising the hidden nature of his divinity. In March 2007 his theological positions were admonished by the Vatican which complained that he lays too much emphasis on the humanity of Jesus.

social worker	One who is employed to tend to the welfare and relations of human beings in a community
Suffering Servant	The prophecy of Second Isaiah, written during the Babylonian Exile, contains four passages known as the Songs of the Suffering Servant, which have been interpreted by the Christian Church as prophecies of the coming of Jesus, even though they were written many centuries before his birth; passages such as Isaiah 53:5 are taken to refer to the sufferings of Jesus and the absolution of sins. Jewish theologians believe the Servant to be the nation of Israel
symbolic	Serving as a symbol, i.e. something that stands for something else
Taizé	An international ecumenical community, founded in 1940 in Taizé in France by Brother Roger; since the 1950s thousands of young people from all over the world have visited Taizé to take part in the weekly meetings of prayer and meditation
theology/theological	Orderly presentation of the ideas which underpin the beliefs that individuals and/or groups might have about God. The New Testament description of the person and work of Christ, together with its various internal interpretative paradigms provides the basis for a Christian Theology. All religions will have their particular theologies. Within Christianity various different theologies can be identified, e.g. Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed, Pentecostalist, etc.
unity/uniformity	The state of being one (unity), as opposed to the state of being the same (uniformity)
Vatican II	The Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, called by Pope John XXIII in 1962; by the time of its adjournment in 1965, it had issued 4 constitutions, 9 decrees and 3 declarations. Among its most important resolutions were the vernacularisation of the liturgy and stressing greater lay participation in the ritual, the decree on ecumenism (<i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i>) and the setting up of an episcopal synod to help the Pope govern the Church
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	An international Christian ecumenical observance kept annually between 18 January (Feast of St Peter) and 25 January (Feast of the Conversion of St Paul)
WCC	The World Council of Churches: a fellowship of 347 churches in more than 110 countries, representing over 560 million Christians, constituted in Amsterdam in 1948 to encourage co-operation and sharing, common witness and action by churches; its headquarters is in Geneva; the Roman Catholic Church is not a member, but sends representatives to its meetings and appoints 12 members to its Faith and Order Commission.

RS3 ER: Studies in Eastern Religions (A2)

SECTION A: Studies in Buddhism

Abidhamma pitaka	The third section of the Pali Canon, containing learned commentaries on the teachings
Amaravati	Theravada Monastery of the Thai Forest Tradition in Hertfordshire, run by the English Sangha Trust
Amida Buddha	The Buddha of the Western Paradise, the Pure Land, and focus of devotion in Japanese Pure Land Buddhism
arhat	Literally ‘worthy’. The highest state attainable in Theravada Buddhism.
bodhisattva	‘Enlightenment being’. In Mahayana Buddhism, a being who has postponed entry into enlightenment in order to assist others
Buddha	Awakened one
buddha-nature	In Mahayana Buddhism, the underlying state of all things, therefore the potential of all beings
Buddhist Society	Founded in 1924 by Christmas Humphreys, the Society is a UK Charity to publish and make known the principles of Buddhism
celestial being	Some buddhas and bodhisattvas are described as celestial beings. This means that they are not thought of as humans, but as beings that manifest in other realms. Buddhists believe that there are many other realms in addition to this human one
Chithurst	Branch of Amaravati Monastery
compassion	(Sanskrit <i>karuna</i>). One of the twin aspects of enlightenment (the other being wisdom).
daimoku	The practice of chanting ‘namu myoho rengo kyo’ (I take refuge in the Lotus Sutra) performed by Nichiren Buddhists
Dalai Lama	The spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people. The present Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the fourteenth. ‘Dalai’ means ocean of wisdom, and a lama is a teacher.
ekayana	Literally ‘one way’. A theme of the Lotus Sutra which promotes the bodhisattva path to enlightenment
enlightened beings	Celestial or human beings who are considered enlightened. Often enlightened beings are seen as demonstrating particular aspects of enlightenment, such as wisdom or compassion
enlightenment	The goal of Buddhists, and the attainment of the Buddha under the bodhi tree. Synonymous with nirvana, though different traditions define it in different ways

enlightenment for all A principle expounded in the Lotus Sutra and recognized in many forms of Mahayana Buddhism that there are no monastic pre-requisites for the attainment of enlightenment

Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO)

The WBO and the FWBO were in 1967 founded by an English Buddhist, Denis Lingwood, who took the name Sangharakshita. Sangharakshita's vision was for a form of Buddhism suitable for westerners. As such, FWBO Buddhism is highly eclectic, and 'lifestyle' is seen as less important than commitment

gohonzon

'Object of worship': the inscription of the daimoku

Jodo Shinsu

Founded in the 13th century by the Japanese monk Shinran, Jodo Shinsu is a form of Pure Land Buddhism which describes humanity as living in the era of mappo, an age in which it has become impossible to achieve enlightenment because humans are too corrupt and proud. Those who despair of their own ability to attain it, and who call on the Buddha Amida in a practice known as nembutsu, will be reborn in the Pure Land

koan

A riddle or a puzzling question, used by a Zen teacher to encourage his or her disciples to abandon ordinary dualistic, discriminative thinking

lay

Not ordained. In Theravada those Buddhists who have not become, or who are not currently, monks or nuns. In some forms of Mahayana Buddhism there is a monk/lay distinction, in others there is not.

Lotus Sutra

One of the most important Mahayana scriptures, which teaches about the potential for Buddha-hood of all beings

Mahayana

'The Greater Vehicle'. One of the two major forms of Buddhism, the other being Theravada. Mahayana tends to emphasise that nirvana can be available here and now, and the notion of the bodhisattva

mandala

A symbolic representation of the universe which is visualised in Tibetan meditation. Mandalas are depicted in paintings, and are often ritually made using coloured powders that are erased at the end of the ritual

mantra

A series of syllables used in Tibetan ritual. Usually a mantra contains the name of an enlightened being, and in repeating the mantra the meditator manifests the qualities of that enlightened being.

meditation

This takes many different forms in Buddhism. It is usually the practice of training the mind to become calm and to experience reality as it really is. Some forms of Buddhism, such as Zen, see ordinary everyday life as a meditation. The Buddha himself meditated in order to become enlightened, and most Buddhists dedicate themselves to substantial periods of meditation every day.

mudra	Hand gestures with particular meanings. Statues of enlightened beings always have mudras, so that they can be identified and associated with a specific Buddhist idea. Mudras are often used in rituals in Tibetan Buddhism
nembutsu	Reciting 'Namu Amida Butsu' – I take refuge in Amida Buddha. This is done spontaneously by Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, in desperation of attaining enlightenment through their own efforts, and relying on the grace of Amida to secure them rebirth in the Pure Land
Nichiren	(1222-82) A Japanese Buddhist reformer who believed that the Lotus Sutra contained the true essence of Buddhism, and all other forms of Buddhism were misguided. He founded the Nichiren shu, from which developed the movements of Nichirenshoshu and Soka Gakkai International. He believed that the only workable practice was chanting the name of the Lotus Sutra 'namu myoho renge kyo (the daimoku).
Nirvana	Literally 'a blowing out' (of the three fires of 'greed, hatred and delusion') Nirvana is conceptualised in many different ways by different schools of Buddhism. It is seen as beyond definition, although terms such as 'bliss', 'the other shore', 'attainment' or 'goal' are often used in reference to it
Order of Buddhist Contemplatives	The Order of Buddhist Contemplatives is a religious order practising Serene Reflection Meditation. The order was founded in 1978 by Reverend Master Jiyu-Kennett (1924-1996). Its headquarters in the Britain is Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey in Northumberland
Pali Canon	The Tipitaka (three baskets, made up of the Vinaya Pitaka, the Sutta Pitaka and the Abidhamma Pitaka); the corpus of scripture held to be authoritative by Theravada Buddhists
Pali Suttas	Sutta means 'thread'. The Pali Suttas are collections of discourses allegedly given by the Buddha
precepts	The basic obligations undertaken by a Buddhist: five for lay people (eight on uposatha days) and ten for monks and nuns. There are also 227 rules in the patimokka
Pure Land	The paradise said to have been 'ripened and adorned' by the Buddha Amida, and upon which all those who call his name are reborn, there to attain instant enlightenment
refuge, going for/taking	The practice of reciting the formula: 'I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Sangha'
renunciation	Giving up one's ties with family and community in order to follow a spiritual life. Also known in Buddhism as 'Going Forth'.
Samatha	Form of meditation designed to achieve mental tranquillity and the cessation of unwholesome mental states

samsara	The round of birth, death and rebirth, driven by greed, hatred and delusion
Samye Ling	Centre for Tibetan Buddhism of the Kagyu lineage in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland
Sangha	The Buddhist community. Sometimes the word refers strictly to the monastic community, sometimes it refers to the wider Buddhist community.
Sanskrit Sutras and commentaries	
	The vast body of literature that Mahayana Buddhists hold as authoritative. Some groups emphasise particular Sutras. Important Sutras include: The Lotus Sutra, the Prajnaparamita Sutras, including the Heart Sutra and the Diamond Sutra, and the Sukhavati Sutras
skilful means	In Sankrit <i>upaya kausalya</i> . Skilful means is a theme in the Lotus Sutra. It refers to the ability of enlightened beings to use whatever resources are available to help people on the path to enlightenment. As such, the teachings are described as 'skilful means' i.e. not 'The Truth' in themselves, but techniques for achieving a purpose. They are merely fingers pointing at the moon
Soto Zen	One of the two main schools of Zen Buddhism, founded by Dogen (1200-53), and emphasising the practice of Zazen – sitting meditation.
Sutta Pitaka	The second section of the Pali Canon, containing the discourses of the Buddha
Theravada	'The Way of the Elders'—the last surviving school which uses only the Pali Canon. It is found predominantly in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand
Thich Nhat Hanh	Vietnamese meditation teacher and peace activist born 1926; he is author of many books and lives in a community called Plum Village in France. He founded the Order of Interbeing, which teaches mindfulness and Engaged Buddhism
Throssel Hole Priory	Monastery of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives in Northumberland
Tibetan Buddhism	The various forms of Buddhism (usually understood to be six schools) to have originated in Tibet (each based to a greater or lesser extent on previous traditions)
Vinaya Pitaka	The first section of the Pali Canon, containing the code of discipline for the Sangha
Vipassana	'Insight meditation' – a form of meditation which seeks insight into the three marks of existence
Wisdom	Sanskrit <i>prajna</i> . One of the twin features of enlightenment, the other being compassion
zazen	'Sitting' : a form of meditation practised by the Soto Zen school
Zen	Literally meditation – the form of Japanese Buddhism based on Chinese Ch'an Buddhism. There are two main schools of Zen: Soto and Rinzai

SECTION B: Studies in Hinduism

Absolute	In some bhakti traditions Krishna is identified with the Absolute. This means he is thought of as Brahman, the Ultimate Truth, rather than as a manifestation of Brahman
allegorical	Narrative or picture designed to symbolise
Aryan culture	The Aryans are believed to have been a people from central Asia who invaded or migrated into the Indus Valley in the early 2 nd Millennium BCE
avatar	The appearance or manifestation of Vishnu on earth. Some traditions state that there are ten avatars of Vishnu, the most important of which were Rama and Krishna. Kalki is yet to come
Bhagavad Gita	Part of the <i>Mahabharata</i> , though it also stands alone. An important scripture in which Krishna teaches Arjuna the importance of dharma, karma yoga and the path of bhakti
bhakti	Devotion. In bhakti traditions it is believed that the love of God is the path to liberation
Bhaktivedanta Manor	Headquarters of ISKCON in the UK. A stately home near Watford bought for ISKCON by George Harrison of the Beatles
caste	Hierarchical groupings within society. The castes (jatis) fit into the divinely ordained varna framework. Caste is preserved by rules governing marriage (endogamy) and eating and drinking (commensality)
dharma	'Law', 'duty', 'obligation'. In Hinduism there is a universal law (sanatana dharma) and each individual must play their role in this by performing their own appropriate duties. Their duties are defined by their class (varna) and stage in life (ashrama)
dowry suicide	A common occurrence in the past. Realising that the dowry imposed upon her parents at the time of her marriage would bankrupt them, a young woman would commit suicide in order to obviate the need for a dowry. Dowry practices are now illegal in India.
foeticide	The abortion of a foetus for reasons of its gender
Gujarat/Gujarati	Gujarat is a state in India from which many of British Hindus originated. Gujarati is their language, but many of them speak other Indian languages, especially Hindi, as well
Hare Krishna	A nickname for ISKCON, given to the movement because members chant it.
Hindutva	'Hinduness' (a word coined by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in his 1923 pamphlet entitled <i>Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?</i>) is the term used to describe movements advocating Hindu nationalism

Indus Valley culture	The way of life in the fertile region surrounding the Indus River in the West of India where some of the world's earliest human settlements have been discovered
infanticide	The illegal practice of killing female babies. Females used to be perceived as a burden on their families because of the cost of dowries, and because it was considered better karma to have sons/to be male
International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)	Hindu Vaishnava movement, founded in the USA in 1965 by AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prahbhupada. It follows the tradition of Caitanya, and aims for the state of permanent Krishna consciousness. Dancing and chanting the maha-mantra are important features of worship. It welcomes non-Indians who are willing to commit to its stringent rule and regulations
karma yoga	The practice of acting according to one's dharma, without self-interest, and surrendering the fruits of action to God
Krishna	One of the most popular of the Hindu gods; depicted in various ways: as the teacher of Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita, as the lover of the Gopis and Radha in the Bhagavata Purana. He is also widely celebrated as the eighth avatar of Vishnu. Depicted as blue (the colour of the infinite sky), often with a flute, and often with cows, he is the focus of much bhakti devotion
murti	An image of a god or goddess
Prabhupada	AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabupada founded ISKCON in 1965
primary source	In the case of a general study of Hinduism, 'primary sources' would be the scriptures (Vedas, Epics and Puranas)
renunciation	Breaking ties with family and community and practicing austerities in order to seek liberation (moksha). This is sometimes done as the last ashrama or stage in life, the sannyasin stage, or at any time in life. Those who renounce before the sannyasin stage are known as sadhus
ritual purity	This is not the same as physical cleanliness but requires the ritual bathing of the body of a worshipper, or of a murti. A person may be made ritually impure by eating food prepared by a member of a lower caste, menstruation and childbirth, contact with death, widowhood and so on. Different traditions of Hinduism have different emphases
sacrifice	No longer widely practiced in Hinduism, but in the Vedic period sacrifice was a crucial ritual, which was seen to maintain cosmic order and to propitiate the gods. A common sacrifice would be of the plant soma, but many other substances were used, and rituals were extremely complicated and had to be followed precisely. Brahmins were in charge of sacrifice, and consequently had much power.

sati	Illegal since 1829, and infrequent, sati is the practice of widows burning themselves to death on the funeral pyres of their husbands. The practice was thought to gain the woman great merit, or even instant moksha, and it enabled her to avoid the stigma of outliving her husband, which was thought to be bad karma. Sati was forced on many widows. There has been no recorded instance of it since 1987
Savarkar	Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966) was an Indian politician and Independence activist who is credited with developing the Hindu nationalist political ideology Hindutva
shruti	'Heard'; a term applied to the Vedas: those scriptures that are believed to be revealed, and thus have the highest status amongst the corpus of Hindu scriptures
smriti	'Remembered'; a term applied to the Epics and the Puranas. These are scriptures which are important but do not have the same status as the shruti scriptures, at least in orthodox circles
stridharma	The dharma (in the sense of duty) for women
Swaminarayan Movement	A Gujarati movement with a significant membership for British Hindus. Originating in the early 19 th century, the movement follows the teachings of Lord Swaminarayan, who is considered to be an avatar of Vishnu. The Swaminarayan movement open the largest temple in Europe in 1995 in Neasden, London
Upanishads	The section of the Vedas that deals with the philosophical principles underlying the practices documented in the Vedas. The most famous Upanishads, for example, the Chandogya or the Brihadaranyaka, speak of the inherent unity of atman and Brahman, and delineate a monist philosophy
Vaishnava bhakti	Devotion directed to Vishnu or his avatars
Vedas, Vedic	The Vedas are the revealed scriptures of Hinduism. Vedic is an adjective referring to anything to do with the culture and religion of the post-Aryan period. Vedic religion is also sometimes known as Brahmanism
sacrifice	Offerings made to deities. Usually the term denotes animals or food which is burnt

SECTION C: Studies in Sikhism

Adi Granth	The Sikh scriptures, usually referred to as the Guru Granth Sahib after Guru Gobind Singh conferred Guruship on the book. The book, containing 1,430 pages, is written in gurmukhi script in a metrical style intended for singing. Contributors include Guru Nanak and some of the other Sikh Gurus, as well as Muslim and Hindu authors
Bhai Gurdas	Sometimes described as the first Sikh historian, the Sikh who assisted Guru Arjan in authenticating the hymns of the previous Gurus and in compiling the Adi Granth
caste	Sikhs reject the notion that humans are not equal. Although Indian Sikhs are aware of the caste into which they are born, a strict undertaking is made not to discriminate on the basis of caste
Dasam Granth	'The tenth book'. The writings of the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh
granthi	The Sikh (male or female) who looks after the <i>Guru Granth Sahib</i> and reads from it
gurdwara	Literally 'Guru's Gate', or 'Court of the Guru.' Any room or building which houses a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib
gurmukhi	'From the mouth of the Guru' – the script in which the Adi Granth is written, the creation of which is attributed to Guru Angad
Guru Arjan	(1563-1606) The fifth of the Sikh Gurus and the first Sikh martyr. Arjan was famous for completing the work on the Golden Temple (Harimandir) and for installing a copy of the Adi Granth within. His reign was a golden period in Sikh history, until he made an unwise political alliance and was tortured and martyred
Guru Gobind Singh	(1666-1708) The tenth Guru, noted for naming the Panth, and the granth as the Guru for the Sikhs after his death
Guru Granth Sahib	The title given to the <i>Adi Granth</i> after Guru Gobind Singh conferred Guruship upon the book
Guru Nanak	(1469-1539) The first Guru and founder of Sikhism. Born a Hindu, he experienced a call to the court of God and was given a special mission. His teachings, as recorded in the Adi Granth, are the basis of Sikh theology
Hinduism	One of the many religions of India
Islam	A religion with a strong presence in India
Japji	The opening of the Guru Granth Sahib; a hymn written by Guru Nanak used frequently in worship. The Japji commences with the Mul Mantra

Khalistan	The notional homeland of the Sikhs
Khalsa	The Pure Ones: the body of initiated Sikhs who wear the Five Ks and vow at the amrit-samskar to defend the faith with their own lives if necessary
kirpan	One of the Five Ks: sword or dagger (sometimes a miniature symbol of one), signifying courage in the defence of right
langar	The kitchen attached to every gurdwara, in which all, no matter what creed or caste, may eat together. Thus the langar is a great symbol for equality.
Maharaja Ranjit Singh	1780-1839 Ruler of the Punjab prior to British rule
miri	Temporal power. Sikhs believe that there is no distinction between the temporal and the spiritual (piri). The Guru Granth Sahib governs both
mukti	Liberation from successive rebirths
Mul Mantra	The opening lines of the Japji at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib, and containing the essence of Sikh belief about God
Namdhari	A Sikh reform movement founded in the 19 th century, which has a very strict lifestyle. It believes that Guru Gobind Singh made the Guru of their founder Ram Singh a Guru (<i>ie</i> rejects the idea that he brought the lineage of human gurus to a close)
Nirankari	A Sikh reform movement founded in the 19 th Century by Baba Dayal Das, which rejected any Sikh teachings other than those of Guru Nanak (<i>eg</i> they reject the idea of the Khalsa)
Operation Bluestar	A military operation in 1984, undertaken at the command of Mrs Indira Gandhi, in which 554 Sikhs were killed. The action was taken against a Sikh agitator, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who had been stockpiling weapons and engaging in military activities against the Indian government. During Operation Blue Star, the Akal Takht was destroyed and the Golden Temple was severely damaged
panth	'Way' – denotes the whole Sikh community
partition	The act that cut the homeland of the Sikhs in half. When India became independent, and Pakistan for the Muslims was created out of the Western portion of India, the Punjab, which lay right across the divide, was cut in half. This meant that those Sikhs living in the fertile region of the Punjab which was now in Pakistan, had to leave. This led to communal rioting, and a great sense of injustice. The Muslims had been given self-rule in their own land. The Sikhs had been denied it.

piri	Spiritual power. Sikhs believe that there is no distinction between the temporal (<i>miri</i>) and the spiritual. The Guru Granth Sahib governs both.
political sovereignty	Self-determination
Punjab	The Indian state from which most Sikhs come, and the region where the Gurus were based
Rahit Maryada	The Sikh code of discipline, approved in 1945, by the elected body the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
Rahit Namas	A number of codes of discipline in use from the eighteenth century onwards
Raj	Literally 'rule'. The Sikh Raj was when Sikhs had self-determination in the Punjab under Maharajah Ranjit Singh. The British Raj is when India was ruled by the British Empire
Ranjit Singh	Ruler of the Punjab 1779-1839– the only period in which the Khalsa had sovereignty in the Punjab. After his death the kingdom was annexed by the British
self-rule	Some Sikhs aspire to self-rule, that is, to have a Sikh government in the Sikh homeland or Khalistan
Singh Sabha	A 19 th century reform movement that sought to promote Sikhism, Sikh education and to care for the running of the gurdwaras, during a period when Sikhism was under threat from Christian missionaries
spiritual	See <i>piri</i>
temporal	See <i>miri</i>
turban	Cloth distinctively tied and used to cover kesh (uncut hair)
Vaisakhi Massacre	In 1919 the British forces under the command of General Dyer surrounded and massacred 337 Sikh men, 41 Sikh boys and a baby. This massacre was provoked by a peaceful public meeting of pilgrims on their way to Amritsar, who had stopped to rest in Jallianwala Bagh, a walled garden. This massacre resulted in Sikhs no longer supporting British rule, and joining Mahatma Gandhi in calls for Indian Independence.

RS3 WR: Studies in Western Religions (A2)

SECTION A: Studies in Islam

Abu Bakr	632-634: The second or third convert to Islam, who accompanied Muhammad on the hijrah. A'isha, Muhammad's favourite wife (after Khadijah) was Abu Bakr's daughter. He was chosen as successor by a small group of the Quraysh, in the absence of Ali.
Ahmed, Leila	Muslim scholar
al-Hallaj	Husayn ibn Mansur, famous Sufi (executed 992), was most famous of ecstatic/intoxicated mystics. His poetry used many images, including the moth and the flame. He is famous for stating 'Ana al-Haqq' (I am truth / God). Arrested and tortured for heresy, and after eight years executed, he accepted death saying, 'Kill me ... for in my death is life'
Ali	Ali, younger cousin of Muhammad, grew up in Muhammad's home and married Muhammad's daughter, Fatima. He was the first male convert. Ali carried the Muslim flag in conquering Makkah in 630, and acted as Muhammad's representative in Madinah. All Muslim traditions honour Ali, as a pious and near perfect Muslim. Named 'Commander of the Faithful', a brave and charismatic warrior. To Shi'a Muslims Ali was imam, or spiritual leader, from the death of Muhammad until his assassination in 661, but to Sunni Muslims, he is the fourth Caliph 656-661. Father of Hasan and Husayn, martyred at Karbala. Ali is buried in Najaf, sacred to Shi'a Muslims.
Allah	<i>lit:</i> The God
ascetic	Person who practises severe self-discipline and abstains from pleasure for religious or spiritual reasons
Ashura	10 th day of month of Muharram; 10 days of Shi'a mourning; this may include public processions, recitations and a re-enactment of Imam Husayn's martyrdom at Karbala. Thousands make the pilgrimage to Husayn's shrine at Karbala, where acts of self-flagellation and public mourning are portrayed.
assassination of Ali	Ali was killed by a Kharijite zealot in 661 for agreeing to arbitration with Mu'awiya
assimilate	To absorb people into a larger group
A'isha	Wife of Muhammad, daughter of Abu Bakr, a major hadith collector, died 678 CE
Caliph (Khalifah)	'Successor' of the prophet and head of the Muslim community
Caliphate	(632-1258 CE) Traditionally divided into three periods, the Rightly Guided Caliphs (632-661), the Umayyad empire (661-750) and the Abbasid empire (750-1258)

degrees of existence	Certain Sufi mystics believed in no distinction within existence ('nothing exists except Allah'—Ibn Arabi), which led to accusations of pantheism. Another Sufi thinker, al-Hallaj, claimed blasphemously, 'I am the Truth', and was crucified for his belief.
democracy	A system of government by the whole population usually through elected representatives
divine light	Based on a famous verse in the Sura of Light (24:35), which encapsulates the theme of divine radiance '...Light upon light! God doth guide whom He will to His light.'
Divine Will	Shari'a
ecstatic mysticism	Sufi adherents who would emphasize love of God through ecstatic or enthusiastic expression. These experiences, which alter states of consciousness, would often express themselves in strange actions and shocking verbal outbursts.
fiqh	<i>lit:</i> 'understanding'; is the science or discipline which tries to ascertain, interpret and apply God's will (shari'a) as found in the Qur'an to all aspects of life—ritual, civil, criminal and public law. This is the science of law (jurisprudence).
five principles of law	<i>Fard (wajib)</i> - obligatory action; <i>mandub</i> - 'commendable' action; <i>mubah</i> - 'permissible' acts; <i>makruh</i> - 'reprehensible' action; <i>haram</i> - forbidden action according to the law.
fundamentalist Islam	The belief that the revitalisation of Islamic societies can come about only through a return to the fundamental principles and practices of Islam. Although regarded as a modern phenomenon, early examples are the Kharijite movement
God as the Beloved	Connected with Sufi Islam, an unique personal devotion towards God's love
hadith	Sayings of the Prophet, the second source of authority for Muslims. According to its authority a hadith may be classed as sahih (sound), hasan (fair) or da'if (weak)
halal lifestyle	Muslim adherence to shari'a
Hasan	Al-Hasan, elder grandson of the Prophet, Ali and Fatima's elder son. Shi'a Muslims believe that Ali, himself divinely designated imam, or spiritual leader, designated his elder grandson imam after him. He, though, remained politically inactive throughout his life
Hidden Imam	Muhammad al-Mahdi: Shi'a belief in the disappearance of the twelfth imam; he is alive on earth, while having connections with prophets of old as well as living ayatollahs; to return as Mahdi at the end of the world

Husayn	Al-Husayn, Ali's second son, led a group of faithful believers against Yazid in Karbala. These events are considered crucial by Shi'a Muslims as the themes of suffering, denied justice and martyrdom surface in this re-enactment. The injustice suffered by Ali is mirrored in the events at Karbala. Husayn's atoning death is seen within Shi'a theology much as Jesus' death is seen by Christians
iconography	Specifically at Karbala, Husayn's image and images of the massacre at Karbala are graphically depicted in art form
ideological	Beliefs set apart as an ideal
ijithad	<i>lit:</i> 'effort'; working out of Islamic principles by use of independent judgement, often used with qiyas, reasoning or analogy
ijma	Consensus of legal opinion on a point of law determined explicitly by the Qur'an and the Sunna
Imam	<i>lit:</i> 'one who stands in front', a leader in prayer, therefore, of Muslim community. Extended to include the legitimate successor of the Prophet as leader of Shi'ite Islam, see <i>Imamate</i> .
Imamate	The title of Muslim leaders within Shi'a tradition, related to the Prophet's family through Ali, the first imam (spiritual leader)
Islam	<i>lit:</i> submission / peace
Islamic mysticism	Sufi Islam
Islamic state	Crucial to the understanding of the Islamic state is the role played by the shari'a and its validity in modern times. The central tenet of the Islamic state to some Muslim thinkers would be the shari'a, which is an all-embracing social order fit for the modern world
Islamophobia	A fear of Islam, a new phenomenon that has developed in the light of recent terrorist activity by fundamentalist groups
Ja'fari	Most prominent Shi'a law school. The main difference is their inclusion of not only the Sunna of the Prophet, but also that of Ali and the Imams. They also reject analogy and consensus as legal sources, since they regard the Imam as the supreme legal authority and interpreter
jihad	<i>lit:</i> fight / struggle: to strive in the cause of Allah
- greater	Effort or exertion in the cause of Allah, a personal quest or battle against temptation and evil
- lesser	Effort or military force in the cause of God; 'holy war' to defend Islam against external aggression
jurisprudence	The theory or philosophy of law, a legal system. See <i>fiqh</i>

Karbala	City in Iraq, scene of Husayn's martyrdom (see <i>Husayn / Ashura</i>)
Khadijah	Muhammad's first wife
Kharijite	Muslim extremists, they combined religious puritanism and religious fundamentalism. They originated in the time of the caliphs Uthman and Ali, and were the first radical dissenters in Islam. They were very pious believers who interpreted the Qur'an and Sunna literally and absolutely. They divided the world into Muslim and non-Muslim (enemy of God). All true believers were obliged to fight (jihad) against the people of hell. They also were wholeheartedly egalitarian and maintained that any good Muslim could be the leader, even if he were a slave.
legal schools (madhabib)	The four great legal schools—Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali—as well as the most prominent Shi'a law school, Ja'fari.
madhabib	School of Islamic law; the four Sunni schools are Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali:
Hanafi	Named after Abu Hanifah (died 767 CE), one of the four great Sunni law schools. Strong in Iraq and Syria and also moved eastwards through Afghanistan to India (Arab Middle East and South Asia). This school stressed the importance of faith over works. 'Confessing with the tongue, believing with the mind and knowing with the heart'. (A.J. Wensick, <i>The Muslim Creed</i>).
Maliki	Named after Abu 'Abdallah Malik b. Anas (died 795 CE); one of the four great Sunni law schools. Strong in North, Central and West Africa.
Al-Shafi'i / Shafi'i	Named after Abu 'Abdallah Muhammad b. Idris al-Shafi'i (died 820 CE), one of the four great Sunni law schools. Now found in East Africa, southern Arabia and Southeast Asia. Al-Shafi'i brought together the four classical roots of Islamic law—Qur'an, Sunna, qiyas and ijma.
Hanbali	Named after Ahmad b. Hanbal (died 855 CE), one of the four great Sunni law schools. Started in the cities of Baghdad and Damascus, but now confined as officially recognised in Saudi Arabia. They stressed the inclusion of faith in works. Faith is not merely the assent of the heart, but must be accompanied by the works of the heart, (the love of Allah and the Prophet).
madrasah	Islamic faith school
materialism	To consider material possessions and physical comfort to be superior to spiritual values
meditation	Religious contemplation
Mernissi	Muslim scholar
modernity	To change traditional beliefs in light of the modern world

Muhammad's successors	Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali: 'the four Rightly Guided Caliphs'
mut'a	Shi'a temporary marriage, determined in advance. Any children born out of this union, in Shi'a terms, are legitimate. The Caliph 'Umar abolished it.
mystical union	The Sufi goal, to experience a personal spiritual union with God
mystical tradition	Generally used to refer to the Sufi tradition
Nation of Islam	Founded circa 1930 in Detroit (also known as Black Muslim). This organization developed by Elijah Muhammad 1897-1975 and proposed a separate black Muslim nation. It came to national prominence under Malcolm X who joined in 1946. A splinter group of this movement has recently undergone a revival under the leadership of Louis Farrakhan
qiyas	Reasoning by analogy in Islamic jurisprudence
Qur'anic	From the Qur'an
Rabi'a of Basra	Rabi'a al-Adawiyya, Sufi guide and teacher (died 801 CE), combined asceticism with a devotional love of God. She declined several offers of marriage and dedicated her life totally to God.
ra'y	A judge's decision based upon his own discretion
Rightly Guided	See <i>Caliph / succession</i>
risalah	messengers of God
secular society	A society concerned with worldly affairs, not religious or spiritual
secularisation	A modern development which leaves behind traditional religious ideas in favour of secular and non-religious beliefs
sema	A Sufi holy dance / a religious practice by the whirling dervishes, in which believers dance in order to lose the ego and experience a spiritual union with God
shari'a	<i>lit.</i> straight path; Islamic Law: The will of Allah, as found in the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet; sacred Way of Islam
Shi'a	The party of Ali
sober mystics	An adherent who follows the path of self-denial and asceticism
succession	Abu Bakr was the first Caliph or successor to Muhammad, followed by 'Umar, 'Uthman and then 'Ali; in mainstream Muslim thought these came to be known as the Rightly Guided Caliphs.
Sufi	Islamic mystic tradition, comes from the word 'wool', which referred to the garments worn by the early ascetics

Sultanate	Muslim sovereign (sultan: one who possesses power). By the 15th century, the central caliphate was replaced by Muslim sultanates whose rule was based on military strength and religious legitimacy. The sultan saw his role as defender and protector of the faith.
Sunna	It is translated as the example or way of the Prophet, the perfect example of how a Muslim should live his / her life.
Sunni	(Custom or normative rule) one of the two main branches of Islam, has differences from Shi'a in its understanding of the Sunna and its acceptance of the first three caliphs.
tawhid	The doctrine of Allah's oneness
theology	The study of the nature of God and religious belief
Traitors of Islam	A title given to Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman by Shi'a Muslims, who believe that Ali was cheated of the Caliphate by his predecessors
Twelve Imams	The dynasty of twelve imams, descendants of Alim who are believed to be semi-divine, spiritual beings by Shi'a Muslims
Twelfth Imam	see <i>Hidden Imam</i>
ulama	(Singular 'alim = scholar) A group of religious scholars whose authority is based on their knowledge of scripture.
Umar	634-644: Abu Bakr appointed Umar Caliph on his deathbed. At one point a violent opponent of Muhammad, he became one of his strongest supporters. He was a highly successful Caliph, but led a simple, modest life. Under his rule, Islam expanded to include Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Iran, and defeated the Byzantine army. He established an effective administration to rule these new lands, and ordered benefits for serving soldiers. He was assassinated by a slave in 644, and on his deathbed appointed a body to select a new Caliph
Ummah	The worldwide community of Muslims
Uthman	644-656. Uthman was elected Caliph following the death of Umar, a pious Muslim but less adept at government. He appointed family members to prominent positions in the affairs of the state and thus created antagonism. The empire continued to expand into Libya and Tunisia. Specifically he is credited with establishing an authoritative version of the Qur'an: but this action also created controversy by a number of Hafiz (Muslims who have memorized the Qur'an). Egyptian rebels assassinated Uthman.
whirling dervishes	Sufi adherents / practitioners of the sema holy dance (see <i>sema</i>)

Section B: Studies in Judaism

Agadut Israel	'Union of Israel' is a world organisation of Orthodox Jewry. "The purpose of Agudat Israel is the solution of the respective tasks facing the Jewish collectivity in the spirit of the Torah." (founding programme, Frankfurt am Main, 1912)
Amidah	<i>lit.</i> 'standing': a standing prayer, recited at synagogue. Originally it had 18 blessings (Ashkenazim: <i>Shemoneh Esreh</i>), it now has 19: praising God's power, knowledge, forgiveness etc. It derives from the time of the first Temple, and this ancient prayer is recited first silently by the congregation, then aloud by the reader
Amos	Old Testament prophet circa 8 th Cent BCE. A simple shepherd who prophesied in northern Israel, condemning social injustice and foretelling doom unless the people reformed
anti-Semitism	Hatred of Jews or prejudice against them
assimilate	To absorb people into a larger group
Baal Shem Tov	'Master of the Good Name', the title given to Israel ben Eliezer, (1698-1760), the founder of the Hasidic movement, (abbreviated to Besht).
Berkovitz	Holocaust theologian; Eliezer Berkovitz's book <i>Faith after the Holocaust</i> (1973), his response, is largely based on the verse in Isaiah 45;15: God hiding his face
charismatic	Inspiring enthusiasm
cleaving	See <i>devekut</i>
coming-of-age	Bar Mitzvah / Bat Mitzvah
Conservative	A group within Jewry which occupies the middle ground between Orthodox and Reform Judaism
contemplative	Given to religious meditation
conversion	An act to convert to a religion. Within Judaism, there are two requirements: circumcision (for a male) and immersion in the ritual bath, <i>mikveh</i> . The applicant is normally interviewed by a <i>Bet Din</i> , court consisting of three rabbis, to test their sincerity and commitment to keep the Jewish precepts
covenant	A pact or contract between God and Israel. In the Bible, God establishes his covenant with Noah, a special covenant with Abraham, (Gen 15: 7-21); a further covenant with Moses on Sinai (Ex 19: 5; 24: 1-8)
devekut	'Attachment to God'; 'devotion'; describes having God permanently in the mind, or being with God. A concept found mainly in Hasidic writings

Diaspora	All communities of Jews living outside Israel.
divine punishment	The traditional understanding of Jewish suffering was as a direct punishment from God for disobedience to the covenant
Dreyfus affair	The Dreyfus case: the trial and the public demand of ‘Death to the Jew’, which prompted Herzl to come to the conclusion that the only solution to the persecution of the Jews was the establishment of a Jewish homeland
Ein Sof	The term is sometimes taken in kabbala to refer to God’s very essence; when more precisely used, it refers to God’s infinite light, before the beginning of the creation process
emanation	Virtues emanating from a source: in Jewish mystical thought, the ten sefirot emanating from Ein Sof
ethnic minority	A group apart from the majority population due to a cultural or religious background
Fackenheim	Emil Fackenheim: Holocaust theologian who argues for the commanding voice at Auschwitz: a 614 th Commandment: to survive as Jews lest “we grant Hitler another posthumous victory”. He also suggests the notion of <i>tikkun</i> , God repairing the damage done in the world
First Zionist Congress	Was convened by Theodor Herzl and held in Basle in the summer of 1897 and was the foundation of the Zionist organisation
halakah (pl. halakhot)	Jewish law; comes from the root halakh, ‘to go’ or ‘to walk’; the halakah is concerned with Jewish law as a whole—the rules and regulations by which the Jew ‘walks’ through life
Hasidism	Ultra-Orthodox traditionalist movement, founded by Baal Shem Tov in 18 th Century Poland
- hasid (pl. hasidim)	Member of Hasidism
Herzl, Theodor	(1860—1904) Foremost founder of political Zionism
Hirsch	Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808—1888), German rabbi and religious thinker. Served as rabbi of traditional congregation of Frankfurt am Maim for 37 years and under his guidance this became the blueprint of his vision of Neo-Orthodox Judaism—or halakhic Judaism in harmony with the modern world
Holocaust	A large-scale destruction by fire; also sacrifice wholly consumed by fire. Jews prefer the term Shoah to describe the European Genocide of 1933-1945
Holocaust theology	The responses of theologians to the ultimate question, ‘Where was God in the Holocaust?’
intermarriage	Jews marrying Gentiles

Jeremiah	Old Testament prophet circa 627 BCE: Jeremiah sounds a note of hope to the people, God remembers them and the faith of their ancestors, and will restore the exiled people to their land in the future
Jewish identity	See <i>matrilineal descent</i>
Jewry	The worldwide population of Jews
Judaism	Religion of the Jews
Kabbalah	Jewish mystical tradition developed in the 11 th and 12 th centuries, culminating in the <i>Zohar</i> , 'Illumination' or 'Brightness', the classical work of the Kabbalah
kosher	<i>lit</i> : 'fit' or 'suitable': Most frequently it refers to the Jewish dietary laws, but can also refer to other matters: that which is done properly or well
Law of Return	'Every Jew has the right to immigrate to the country [Israel]'; the Knesset passed this law unanimously on July 5, 1950
Levi, Primo	Born in Turin in 1919 and trained as a chemist. Arrested as a member of the anti-fascist resistance he was deported to Auschwitz. His autobiographical works: ' <i>Is This a Man</i> ' and ' <i>The Truce</i> ' are excellent examples of Holocaust testimony. He was a talented writer of novels, short stories and columns in the Italian press before his tragic death in 1987
liberalisation	Become less rigorous or strict
liturgical	The order of the daily, Shabbat and festival services
Lubavitch	The branch of the Habad tendency in Hasidism with many thousand followers all over the Jewish world. (Habad—the movement / tendency within Hasidism which places particular emphasis on the role of intellect)
matrilineal descent	In traditional Judaism, an individual is only considered Jewish if born of a Jewish woman
Maybaum	Ignaz Maybaum; Holocaust theologian: his response to the holocaust is in defence of the traditional understanding of Jewish suffering, boldly declaring 'Hitler, my servant', cf. Nebuchadnezzar is seen as an instrument of God's punishment. He sees the Holocaust as an event, which signalled the birth pangs of Israel
meditation	Religious contemplation
Messianic	The doctrine / belief that no Jewish thinker has given up entirely, the belief in the coming of 'the anointed one', who will usher in a new era for mankind, when all will worship the true God in peace
Mitnagdim	'Opponents' or 'protestants', the traditionalists who opposed the ideas and practices of Hasidism

Mitzrachi	Religious Zionist movement founded in 1902 whose special emphasis was ‘the land of Israel for the people of Israel in accordance with the Torah of Israel’
mysticism	Refers to a deep religious experience or direct and intense communion with God. The Kabbalah is often identified with Jewish mysticism.
non-orthodox	All denominations of Judaism that do not belong to the orthodox grouping within the religion
Orthodox	The branch within Judaism which accepts literally that the ‘Torah is from heaven’. Some within orthodoxy would prefer the term ‘Torah–true’ to describe their religious observance. A popular definition of an orthodox Jew is the Jew who obeys the rules laid down in the standard Code of Jewish Law (the <i>Shulhan Arukh</i>).
persecution	See <i>anti-Semitism</i>
Pittsburgh Platform	Adopted by the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the principal reform rabbinical organisation in 1889. It contains the basic statements of Reform in America
pogrom	Anti-Semitic riot, more specifically to organised attacks on Jews in Russia from 1880s
Potok, Chaim	Rabbi and author, born and educated in New York. His novels, <i>The Promise</i> , <i>The Chosen</i> and <i>My Name is Asher Lev</i> concentrate mainly on Hasidic communities in the USA
process of emanation	See <i>Sefirot</i>
Promised Land	Israel
prophets	Certain individuals inspired by God, which enabled them to see into the future and relay a message from the divine to their fellow human beings
rabbi	<i>lit</i> : ‘great man’ / ‘teacher’: teacher of Judaism, qualified to make decision in Jewish law
rebbe	A variation of ‘rabbi’, but used to distinguish a rabbi from the Hasidic guide / master also called a tzaddik (zaddik). His main function would be to teach the Torah and give decisions on Jewish law, but also a spiritual guide who would pray on his follower’s behalf
Reform	The movement that rose in the early 19 th century in Germany with the aim of reinterpreting, reforming Judaism in the light of Western thought, values and culture
reparation	See <i>tikkun</i>

Rubenstein	Richard Rubenstein, Holocaust theologian: in <i>After Auschwitz</i> (1966) he argues that the traditional belief in a God acting in history is indefensible. He therefore, states that Jews are living in the time of “the death of God”, which he reinterprets as a “holy nothingness”
secular society	A society concerned with worldly affairs, not religious or spiritual
sefirot	The powers of the godhead as taught by the Kabbalah. The doctrine states that the Ein Sof (The Infinite) produces, by a process of emanation, ten powers in which it (Ein Sof) becomes manifest. The ten sefirot are: crown; wisdom; understanding; loving kindness; power (judgement); beauty; victory; splendour; foundation; sovereignty
Shabbat observance	The commandment to keep the Shabbat is stated in the fourth commandment, in both versions of the Decalogue. The extent of strict observance to the halakhah depends on the branch within Judaism
Shema	Jewish declaration of faith: ‘Hear (<i>shema</i>) O Israel, the Lord our God , the Lord is One’ (Deut 6:4).
Song of Songs	Traditional thought connects the authorship with King Solomon. Rabbi Avika interpreted the book as a ‘Holy of Holies’; a portrayal of God’s love (the lover) towards the community of Israel (the beloved)
State of Israel	Founded on May 14 th 1948 in reaction to the Jewish genocide in Europe. Population of about 7.2 million, majority Jews; Israel is the world’s only Jewish state
synagogue	<i>lit:</i> assembly: Jewish house of worship, and is given the Hebrew names <i>bet ha Kneset</i> , ‘house of assembly’; <i>bet ha midrash</i> ‘house of study’; and <i>bet ha tefillah</i> , ‘house of prayer’, which is a fair summary of its function within the Jewish community
Talmud	<i>lit:</i> ‘teaching’ or ‘study’: the work of collected scholars, as a running commentary to the Mishnah. There are two Talmuds: Palestinian and Babylonian; which digest and provide a guide on the Jewish Bible
tikkun	‘Reparation’ is the ‘raising’ of a Holy Spark back to its source and the reconciliation of two seeming opposites, either in ourselves or in the world. The mystics tried to mend the earthly rupture, which had made the Jew homeless, through special prayers, and rituals, which they regarded as mystical acts of tikkun. Through the application of tikkun the Laws of the Kabbalah are put into action. Emil Fackenheim borrows this word from Jewish mystics such as Joseph Caro to talk of healing the earthly rupture brought about by the holocaust. Through acts of tikkun, those who live after the holocaust are able to mend the wounds of the past.
Torah	<i>lit:</i> ‘the teaching’: is normally used to refer to the Pentateuch: but a wider meaning can include the whole of Jewish teaching, including the Bible and oral law

Torah-exposition	Explanation of and commentary on the Torah
Torah-true	A more correct term to describe the Orthodox branch within Judaism
tzaddik	Charismatic leader in Hasidism, see <i>rebbe</i>
Ultra Orthodox	A branch to the right of traditional orthodox practice
Wiesel	Elie Wiesel: author, theologian and holocaust survivor: his trilogy of books, most notably ' <i>Night</i> ', is by far the most celebrated of holocaust literature, in which he discusses the relationship of God to his people in the depths of Auschwitz
Zionism	The desire to return to Zion, often seen in Jewish liturgy and celebration within festivals: e.g. Pesach. Focuses on the Covenant and the land of Israel
- political	Its main founder was Theodor Herzl, in ' <i>Der Judenstadt</i> ', which was published in the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair
- religious	See also: <i>Mizrachi party</i>
Zionist Movement	The movement that started at the end of the 19 th century with the aim of establishing a homeland for Jews in Palestine
Zohar	'Illumination' or 'Brightness', the classical work of the Kabbalah, which contains the revelations of the divine mysteries given to the 2 nd century teacher Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai and his mystic circle. It is a unique and profound work famous for its mystical style and daring flights of the imagination

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