GCSE

WJEC GCSE Religious Studies

Approved by Qualifications Wales

Guidance for Teaching: Unit 3

Teaching from 2025
For award from 2027

This Qualifications Wales regulated qualification is not available to centres in England.

Made for Wales.
Ready for the world.

WJEC would like to thank the students and teachers of Fitzalan High School, Cardiff and Llanwern High School, Newport for their participation in the creation of these covers.

Contents

Introduction

The WJEC GCSE Religious Studies has been approved by Qualifications Wales and is available to all centres in Wales. It will be awarded for the first time in Summer 2027, using grades A* to G.

Aims of the Guidance for Teaching

The principal aim of the Guidance for Teaching is to support teachers in the delivery of WJEC GCSE Religious Studies and to offer guidance on the requirements of the qualification and the assessment process. The Guidance for Teaching is **not intended as a comprehensive reference**, but as support for teachers to develop stimulating and exciting courses tailored to the needs and skills of their learners. The guide offers possible classroom activities and links to useful resources (including our own, freely available digital materials and some from external sources) to provide ideas for immersive and engaging lessons.

Additional ways that WJEC can offer support:

- sample assessment materials and mark schemes
- professional learning events
- examiners' reports on each unit
- direct access to the subject officer
- free online resources
- Exam Results Analysis
- Online Examination Review

Qualification Structure

WJEC GCSE Religious Studies consists of 4 units. The qualification is unitised and does not contain tiering. Aside from Unit 1, which is an introductory unit, there is no hierarchy implied by the order in which the other units are presented.

	Unit title	Type of Assessment	Weighting
Unit 1	**Religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings and practices**	Written examination	30%
Unit 2	**Religion and relationships**	Non-examination assessment	20%
Unit 3	**Roles, rights and responsibilities**	Written examination	30%
Unit 4	**Religion and human rights**	Non-examination assessment	20%

Assessment

Summary of Assessment

Unit 3: Roles, rights and responsibilities Written examination*:* 1 hour 15 minutes **30% of qualification** **60 marks**
Questions requiring objective responses, questions that require short and extended answers.

The examinations for Units 1 and 3 will be available for the first time in summer 2026. The submission of Unit 2 will be available in spring 2026. The submission of Unit 4 will be available for the first time in summer 2027.

The first award of the qualification will be 2027.

Overview of Unit 3

The purpose of this unit is to:

- explore key diverse religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and worldviews
- develop an understanding of the different perspectives and interpretations about what makes us human, caring for the world, animal rights, freedom of religious expression and medical ethics
- explore sources of authority and ethical systems that shape religious and non-religious perspectives towards what makes us human, caring for the world, animal rights, freedom of religious expression and medical ethics.

Roles, rights and responsibilities
(30% of the qualification)

The unit is divided into three parts:

- Christian perspectives or Catholic Christian perspectives
  Choose **one** of the following options:
  - a – Christian perspectives
  - b – Catholic Christian perspectives

- World religion perspectives
  Choose **one** of the following options:
  - a – Buddhist perspectives
  - b – Hindu perspectives
  - c – Islamic perspectives
  - d – Jewish perspectives
  - e – Sikh (Sikhi) perspectives

- Non-religious perspectives

Non-religious beliefs can be assessed in isolation and/or in relation to the religions studied.

In this unit, learners will develop understanding in:	
3.1	Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth – Christian OR Catholic Christian perspectives
3.2	Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life – Christian OR Catholic Christian perspectives
3.3	Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – Christian OR Catholic Christian perspectives
3.4	Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth – Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish OR Sikh perspectives
3.5	Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life – Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish OR Sikh perspectives
3.6	Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish OR Sikh perspectives
3.7	Roles, rights and responsibilities: stewardship of the earth – non-religious perspectives
3.8	Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life – non-religious perspectives
3.9	Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – non-religious perspectives

Unit 3 Assessment objectives and weightings

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, practices, and teachings	5%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values, and philosophical convictions	11%
AO3	Analyse, evaluate, or make judgements on a variety of ethical and moral issues, religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings, practices, values, and philosophical convictions	14%

Unit 3 Teacher Guidance

Christianity

3.1a Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth – Christian perspectives		
	Content Amplification	**Teacher Guidance**
3.1.1a Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Christian perspectives	Christian beliefs, teachings and practices about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • based on the belief that God created the world ex nihilo; Genesis 1:2, and humans are created in the image of God; Genesis 1:26 • humans have been given control as part of God's plan - dominion; Genesis 1:26–28; Psalm 8:6 • humans have been given a unique, God-given duty to protect creation - stewardship; Genesis 2:15 • stewardship also implies using natural resources wisely and sustainably; Leviticus 25 8-25. How the aims and work of A Rocha UK reflect Christian beliefs about stewardship.	Christians believe that God created the world out of nothing (ex nihilo). (Genesis 1:2) This means that nothing existed before this, and that he created everything. Only God can do this as he is omnipotent (all-powerful). Christians believe that human beings were the most important part of God's Creation. Humans are the only species to be created 'imago Dei' or 'in God's image.' (Genesis 1:26) To be created in God's image means that humans reflect certain aspects of God's character, such as love, creativity, morality, and the capacity for relationships. Humans were given dominion over all creation which means they have power and control over it. (Genesis 1:26-28) (Psalm 8:6) However, they have also been given the responsibility to care for and rule over creation responsibly, called stewardship. Suggested learning activity: • Group work - Give each group a Bible passage related to stewardship (e.g., Genesis 1:26-28, Psalm 8:6 or 24:1, or Matthew 25:14-30). Ask learners to read and discuss their meaning. What does the passage teach about our responsibility for creation? How might this apply to our lives today? Groups present their insights to the class, focusing on practical ways Christians can live out stewardship in today's society. Information on A Rocha UK can be found here: A Rocha UK – Caring for creation

		Links should be made with the aims and work of the charity and the Christian beliefs about stewardship. A Rocha UK reflects the Christian belief in stewardship by emphasising care for creation as a core part of its mission. A Rocha UK, as a Christian conservation organisation: • seeks to protect and restore habitats, wildlife, and biodiversity, reflecting the belief that caring for creation is a way of honouring God's work • The charity advocates for sustainable living and encourage communities to care for the Earth by reducing environmental harm and fostering sustainable practices. • educates individuals and communities about the importance of environmental stewardship, linking faith with action to inspire care for God's creation. Suggested learning activity: • Research A Rocha and create an infographic on the work they do and how this reflects Christian beliefs in stewardship.
3.1.2a Animal rights - Christian perspectives	Christian beliefs, teachings and practices about animal rights: • animals were created by God and He declared all creation 'very good'; Genesis 1:31 • God gives humans dominion over animals; Genesis 1:26-28 • stewardship - humans are expected to care for and manage animal life wisely and compassionately, Proverbs 12:10; Exodus 20:10. Christian perspectives on using animals for human benefit:	Christians believe that animals are part of God's creation, (Genesis 1:31), entrusted to human care and stewardship. Humans have dominion over Creation, (Genesis 1:26-28), and there are different interpretations of what this means in practice. However, many Christians emphasise compassion, respect, and responsible treatment of animals, reflecting a moral responsibility to protect and preserve them as God's creation. (Proverbs 12:10, Exodus 20:10). They should not cause them any unnecessary suffering, and so the Church opposes any form of animal cruelty, including harm or exploitation. (Matthew 10:31, Proverbs 12:10). Some Christians become vegetarian or vegan in line with these teachings. However, other Christians may believe that animals can be used for food as long as no unnecessary suffering is caused during the slaughter process. (Genesis 9:3)

	• Genesis 1:26-28 – different interpretations of the concepts of 'dominion' and 'stewardship' • balancing using animals for human benefit and avoiding unnecessary harm; Matthew 10:31; Proverbs 12:10 • the use of animals for food; Genesis 9:3 • vegetarianism or veganism based on teachings such as Genesis 1:26-28. Christian perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • essential for advancing human health and well-being • must try to minimise suffering • call for strict regulations to ensure humane treatment • supporting the development of alternatives to animal testing (such as computer modelling). How the aims and work of Christian Vegetarians & Vegans UK reflect Christian beliefs about animal rights.	For some Christians, there is a call to balance human needs with the well-being of animals, supporting sustainable practices that respect animal habitats and biodiversity. Some Christians actively support animal welfare organisations and initiatives that promote humane treatment of animals, including laws protecting animals from abuse. The Church supports ethical treatment of animals in farming and the reduction of animal suffering in food production, advocating for sustainable and humane practices. Christian perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research are guided by the principles of stewardship, respect for life, and moral responsibility. Many Christians acknowledge the potential benefits of research but also stress the importance of ethical considerations in how animals are treated. The use of animals for research is permissible if it meets certain conditions, particularly when the research has significant benefits to human health, especially in the context of advancing medical treatments and saving lives. For example, treatments for cancer or Parkinson's disease, or developments of vaccines or medicines such as penicillin. However, animals should not be subjected to unnecessary or extreme pain and suffering and should always be treated with respect. Research should prioritise alternative methods whenever possible, such as non-invasive studies such as computer modelling, to reduce animal harm. The research that contributes to significant medical breakthroughs is supported by many Christians, especially when it has the potential to alleviate human suffering. However, this research must be conducted responsibly, respecting both human and animal dignity. Suggested learning activities: • Future of Science: Lesson Plan 1 - Animal Aid • Wasted Lives Student Activities - Animal Aid

		The Christian Vegetarian Association (CVA) aims to promote a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle as an expression of Christian faith. They believe that caring for God's creation, showing compassion to animals, and protecting the environment align with biblical teachings. They highlight the environmental benefits of plant-based diets, such as reducing deforestation, pollution, and climate change. They also promote the physical and spiritual benefits of a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle. CHRISTIAN VEGETARIANS & VEGANS UK - Home Suggested lesson activity: • Classroom Resources for RE (RE Today) - Veganism in Education (teachvine.org)

3.2a Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life - Christianity		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.2.1a What makes us human - Christian perspectives	Christian beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • created in God's image; Genesis 1:26-27 • possess a soul, a spiritual dimension; Matthew 10:28; Ecclesiastes 12:7 • possess autonomy - free will, and moral responsibility; Genesis 3; Romans 2:14-15 • fell into sin but given an opportunity for redemption through Jesus - John 3;16.	Many Christians believe that human beings are the most important part of God's Creation. Humans are the only species to be created 'imago Dei' or 'in God's image.' (Genesis 1:27) To be created in God's image means that humans reflect certain aspects of God's character, such as love, creativity, morality, and the capacity for relationships. Christians believe that human beings are the only species to have a soul, or spiritual dimension. The soul is seen the part of humans that lives on in the afterlife and is immortal. (Matthew 10:28) It also allows humans to connect with God. (Ecclesiastes 12:7) Christians believe that humans have free will, meaning they have the God-given gift of the capacity to choose between good and evil. (Genesis 3). However, this also means that humans have personal autonomy and must therefore take moral responsibility for their actions and accept the consequences they bring. They are expected to act according to God's law, which is 'written in their hearts', (Romans 2:14-15), meaning that humans have an innate sense of morality and an awareness of right and wrong given by God, which is imprinted in their soul. Christians believe that salvation is a gift from God, made possible through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. It involves being restored to a right relationship with God and receiving eternal life in heaven. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid the price for the sins of humanity, ensuring they are redeemed and have the opportunity to be reconciled with God. A helpful summary of the beliefs in salvation and atonement can be found here: How God Deals With Evil Without Destroying Humanity

3.2.2a	Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Christian perspectives	Christian perspectives of when life begins: • for many, that human life begins at conception • that at the point of conception, the embryo is fully human with inherent dignity and worth; Psalm 139:13-16 • a minority of Christians believe that personhood or full human life begins at birth. Christian beliefs and teachings about abortion: • the principle of the sanctity of life - created by God in his image; Genesis 1:26 • many oppose abortion, seeing it as the taking of an innocent life; Exodus 20:13 God has a plan for each human life and abortion prevents this; Jeremiah 1:5 • some may accept abortion in certain extraordinary circumstances • some Christians advocate for alternatives to abortion, such as adoption. Christian beliefs and teachings about euthanasia: • the principle of the sanctity of life - created by God in his image; Genesis 1:26 • only God should decide when a life should end • many strongly oppose active euthanasia viewing this as ending a life given by God; Exodus 20:13 • palliative care is an opportunity to show love and compassion; Galatians 6:2 • some support passive euthanasia on compassionate grounds • some are concerned about the 'slippery slope' argument.	For many Christians, human life begins at conception, when the egg and sperm meet and fertilise. From this moment, the unborn life is considered fully human, possessing dignity and intrinsic value (Psalm 139:13-16). It retains the same rights as any human, and it should be protected and respected at all costs. Christians believe that God has created all life, and so only he can take it away. A few Christians may suggest that human life begins at birth. This could be because they see the moment of birth as a clear transition when a baby becomes an independent being. Additionally, this view may emphasise the importance of breath, as in Genesis 2:7, where God breathes life into Adam, symbolising the beginning of human life. These Christians might also highlight the practical and legal features of birth, for example giving the baby a name and legally registering the birth within the first six weeks. However, they would also recognise the potential of the unborn foetus before birth. Abortion: The deliberate removal of a foetus from the womb in order to end the pregnancy. Every human being, from conception, is made in the image of God (imago Dei) and is therefore sacred. (Genesis 1:26). This belief is called the sanctity of life. This leads many Christians to oppose abortion, believing it breaks the commandment in Exodus 20:13 ("You shall not murder") by ending an innocent life. They also cite Jeremiah 1:5, where God says, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you," emphasising that God has a plan for every life, and abortion disrupts this divine purpose. Many Christians promote alternatives to abortion, such as adoption, believing it offers a positive solution while supporting both the mother and child. They may work with or support organisations that provide help and resources for expectant mothers, such as Care for the Family or the Pregnancy Crisis Helpline.

		Some Christians accept abortion in exceptional circumstances, such as when the mother's life is at risk, in cases of rape, or severe foetal abnormalities, such as a serious disability. They see these situations as complex moral dilemmas requiring compassion and prayerful consideration. A Christian facing a situation such as this may take advice from their priest or vicar before making their decision. Suggested learning activities: • Opinionnaire – Give learners a table with statements about abortion. Ask them to give their opinion on each statement, and state if the statement is true or false and why. They then need to read some information about abortion and write the correct answers (true/false with evidence) for each statement. • Card sort – reasons for and against abortion • Venn diagram – compare and contrast two religious views on abortion, for example Christianity and another religion. • Case studies – Read the case studies and respond to each one from a personal viewpoint, and from the viewpoint of the religions studied. What are the rights and wrongs of abortion? - BBC Teach Good Learning in RE 7 Responsible for Abortion 13-15s.pdf (natre.org.uk) Euthanasia: From the Greek meaning 'good death', it is sometimes called 'mercy killing'. It means ending a person's life in order to bring an end to their suffering, e.g. if they have a terminal illness.

		Every human being, from conception, is made in the image of God (imago Dei) and is therefore sacred. (Genesis 1:26). This belief is called the sanctity of life. As all human life comes from God, many Christians believe that only God has the power and authority to decide we life should end. Active euthanasia is therefore seen as breaking the commandment "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13), as it involves deliberately ending a God-given life. Christians may view palliative care as an opportunity to "carry each other's burdens" (Galatians 6:2), showing love and support to those who are suffering. Some Christians accept passive euthanasia (withholding treatment to allow natural death) as a compassionate choice in certain cases, distinguishing it from actively causing death. Others worry that allowing euthanasia could lead to its misuse, devaluing life and pressuring vulnerable people to end their lives prematurely. Suggested learning activities: • The View from the Classroom - Euthanasia - TrueTube • Euthanasia: Playing God? - TrueTube • Should assisted suicide be legalised? | Religious Studies - Matters of Life and Death - YouTube • P4C stimulus: NATRE Music - euthanasia There are a wide range of perspectives on both abortion and euthanasia within the Christian community. Some Christians believe that neither of these actions are morally acceptable, while others believe they can be accepted in certain circumstances. Learners must have the opportunity to explore the different perspectives and to analyse these ideas in the light of faith and belief.

		Arguments for and against abortion: For: • It might be too traumatic for a woman to carry the pregnancy to term if it is the result of rape. • Some people argue that life begins at birth so abortion is acceptable. • If the mother's life is in danger, an abortion can be justified. • People who are 'pro-choice' believe that women have the right to decide what happens to their own body. • The quality of life for a severely disabled child might be so low that it is kinder for that child not to be born. • Abortion is legal in the UK up to 24 weeks. Against: • Life should not be taken away because it is holy and special (sanctity of life). • Abortion is not the only option; unwanted babies could be adopted. • If life begins at conception, then abortion can be seen as murder. The Ten Commandments state 'do not kill' (Exodus 20:13). • The unborn child has a right to live. • People born with severe disabilities can have an excellent quality of life. Arguments for and against euthanasia: For: • If a person has no quality of life, they should be allowed to die peacefully. • No person should have to live with tremendous pain. • If a person is not independent, they may feel their life is not worth living.

		• It gives back an element of control or independence to the person. Against: • Life should not be taken away because it is holy and special (sanctity of life). • It's currently illegal in the UK. • It is classed as murder. The Ten Commandments state 'do not kill' (Exodus 20:13). • It doesn't just affect the person – family and friends will also be affected by the decision. • Palliative care is available to help with suffering. • Slippery slope argument – once we start to allow people to receive euthanasia, where will it end? • Only God can take away life.

3.2a Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life - Christianity		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.3.1a Freedom of religious expression - Christian perspectives	Christian beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression: • the Great Commission; Matthew 28:19-20 • part of humanity's God-given free will • the importance of people of other faiths having the same right to religious expression; Matthew 7:12 • supporting the right to religious expression due to historical and contemporary persecution of Christians • religious expression in all forms should be allowed in public spaces; Matthew 5:14-16.	The Great Commission refers to the final instruction Jesus gave his disciples: to share the faith with others and to baptise them. (Matthew 28:19-20). Many Christians believe they should evangelise and share their faith with others in order to fulfil this instruction. Christians promote the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12), which calls for treating others as we would want to be treated. This means they respect the freedom of other religious faiths to practise and express their beliefs. Christians believe that human beings are created with free will, a gift from God, allowing individuals to choose their own beliefs and actions. This includes the right to accept or reject faith, emphasising the importance of respecting others' religious freedom. Inspired by Matthew 28:19-20, many Christians see it as their duty to witness to their faith and share the truth of the Gospel, even when faced with opposition. They also recognise the importance of dialogue with other faiths, aiming to build mutual understanding and respect. Many Christians are sensitive to religious freedom because of their own history of persecution, such as during the early Church and more recent periods of religious intolerance. This experience fosters a commitment to defending religious expression for all. Christians often advocate for the freedom to pray, wear religious symbols, and participate in religious activities in public spaces. They believe that religious expression is a fundamental human right that should be respected in a diverse society.

		Suggested learning activity: • Case Study Analysis - present real-life examples of legal cases, such as rulings on wearing religious symbols in public spaces or faith schools in the UK. Learners work in pairs to analyse the case, identify key issues, and discuss how they would resolve the situation.
3.3.2a The use of personal wealth - Christian perspectives	Christian beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • linked to the concept of stewardship • the use of wealth should reflect God's purposes and values • tithing as a traditional practice • contributions during church services • wealth as a blessing that comes with great responsibility; Matthew 25:14-30 • wealth for its own sake as incompatible with a life of faith; Matthew 19:24 • Matthew 6:24 – cannot worship God and money • focus on storing up "treasures in heaven" rather than on earth; Matthew 6:19-21 • "Love of money is the root of all evil"; 1 Timothy 6:10 • loving money will never bring real satisfaction; Ecclesiastes 5:10 • monks and nuns take a vow of poverty - more focus on spiritual values • the Prosperity Gospel.	Wealth is not evenly spread out across society in Wales. Some people are much richer than others. Christians believe that being wealthy is not wrong but ethical consideration must be given to the acquisition and use of their wealth. Christians also believe that a person's value should be judged on their actions and not by what they possess or the amount they have. Many Christian churches maintain the traditional practice of giving a portion (usually 10%) of income to the church to continue God's work, which reflects gratitude and obedience. Most Church services will incorporate a time for voluntary contributions or donations to support the church's mission, including community support and worship activities. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus warns his disciples that money can take the place of God in their lives and that they must be careful to remain faithful to him. In the Parable of the Rich Man, a rich young ruler wanted to follow Jesus and was told to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor. Jesus said in this parable that it is 'easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' (Matthew 19:24). This means that wealth for its own sake is incompatible with a life of faith. In Matthew 25:14-30 (Parable of the Talents), wealth is seen as a blessing that must be wisely managed and shared for God's purposes. Matthew 6:24 warns against focusing on money rather than God, emphasising the need for devotion to God above all else.

		Ecclesiastes 5:10 teaches that loving money will never bring lasting happiness. Jesus also taught that wealth doesn't make people happy and can lead to greed. 1 Timothy 6:10 warns that excessive desire for wealth leads to spiritual harm. Christians believe that wealth is a gift from God and should be used responsibly to care for others and the world. All of the Gospels taught that Jesus wanted his followers to care for the poor. In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, he teaches that God will judge people, not on how much wealth they have, but on how they have treated the poor. The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-30) also reinforces this point and explains that wealth itself has no benefit in the afterlife; it is how wealth is used in this life that matters. Matthew 6:19-21 encourages focusing on eternal rewards rather than accumulating earthly possessions. Any wealth should be gained and used in a way that is pleasing to God, for example, promoting generosity, justice, and compassion for those in need. The Prosperity Gospel is a belief that financial blessing is a sign of God's favour and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes can lead to greater wealth. Supporters of this idea teach that God wants Christians to be prosperous and that wealth is a reward for their righteousness and faithfulness. However, it can be argued that this is not based on Christian teaching and focuses on materialism rather than spiritual growth and care for others.

		Suggested learning activities: • Inference grid – Group work • Assign each group a key Bible passage (e.g., Matthew 6:19-21, 1 Timothy 6:10, or Matthew 25:14-30). Ask learners to use the inference grid to help them summarise the passage. Discuss what it teaches about the use of wealth and its implications for Christians today. Groups share their insights with the class, and the teacher facilitates a discussion on the relevance of these teachings in modern life. • Scenarios – Present learners with real-life scenarios where wealth and values intersect, such as deciding how to spend a large inheritance or balancing personal needs with charitable giving. • Ask learners to respond to each one in the light of Christian teachings. They could compare this with their own view. • Research the Prosperity Gospel. Evaluate this in the light of Christian teachings.

Catholic Christianity

3.1b Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth - Catholic Christian perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.1.1b Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Catholic Christian perspectives	Catholic beliefs, teachings and practices about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • based on the belief the God created the world ex nihilo; Genesis 1:2 • humans are created in the image of God; Genesis 1:26 • Pope Francis' teaching in '*Laudato Si'* • humans have been given control as part of God's plan - dominion; Genesis 1:26–28; Psalm 8:6 • humans have been given a unique, God-given duty to protect creation - stewardship; Genesis 2:15 • stewardship implies using natural resources wisely and sustainably; Leviticus 25: 8-25. • How the aims and work of The Laudato Si Movement reflect Catholic beliefs about stewardship.	Catholics believe that God created the earth ex nihilo (out of nothing). (Genesis 1:2) This means that nothing existed before this, and that he created everything. Only God can do this as he is omnipotent (all-powerful). Catholics believe that human beings were the most important part of God's Creation. Humans are the only species to be created 'imago Dei' or 'in God's image.' (Genesis 1:26) To be created in God's image means that humans reflect certain aspects of God's character, such as love, creativity, morality, and the capacity for relationships. Humans were given dominion over all creation which means they have power and control over it. (Genesis 1:26-28, Psalm 8:6) However, they have also been given the responsibility to care for and rule over creation responsibly, called stewardship. (Genesis 2:15) This means that they are expected to use the earth's resources wisely and sustainably (Leviticus 25:8-25). Suggested learning activity: • Group work - Give each group a Bible passage related to stewardship (e.g., Genesis 1:26-28, Psalm 8:6 or 24:1, or Matthew 25:14-30). Ask learners to read and discuss their meaning. What does the passage teach about our responsibility for creation? How might this apply to our lives today? Groups present their insights to the class, focusing on practical ways Christians can live out stewardship in today's society.

		In 2015, Pope Francis wrote a letter called 'Laudato Si' (On Care for Our Common Home.) In his letter, he calls all people to take better care of 'our common home', the earth and to think carefully about how we are shaping the future of our planet. He asks that we acknowledge the urgency of the environmental challenges and to change our ways to live in a more sustainable way. This animation is useful for summarising the message of Laudato Si: Laudato Si' animation | CAFOD Information and useful resources on the Laudato Si Movement can be found here: Laudato Si' Movement The aims and work of the Laudato Si Movement reflect Catholic beliefs about stewardship as outlined in Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si, which emphasises care for creation as a moral and spiritual responsibility. The movement promotes: • environmental protection and sustainable practices, encouraging Catholics to care for the Earth as God's creation. It aligns with the belief that humans are called to be stewards of the environment (Genesis 1:28). • advocates for an approach to environmental care that considers the global community, reflecting Catholic teachings on the dignity of all life and the call to act for the common good. • focuses on the impact of environmental issues on vulnerable communities, emphasising the Catholic belief in social justice, particularly the need to protect the poorest and most marginalised who are most affected by environmental crises. • encourages practical actions like reducing carbon emissions, promoting renewable energy, and advocating for policies that uphold creation care, reflecting Catholic concerns for the environment and the need to put faith into action.

		Suggested learning activities:
		• These resources could be adapted for KS4:
		  • Laudato Si' Champions guidance for teachers (stmarys.ac.uk)
		  • Laudato_Si_for_young_people.pdf (ctfassets.net)

3.1.2b Animal rights - Catholic Christian perspectives	Catholic beliefs, teachings and practices about animal rights: • animals were created by God in Genesis 1:31, God declares all of creation, including animals, "very good" • God gives humans dominion over animals; Genesis 1:26-28 • stewardship - humans are expected to care for and manage animal life wisely and compassionately, Proverbs 12:10; Exodus 20:10 • St. Francis of Assisi taught about the interconnectedness of all life as part of God's creation (Canticle of the Creatures). Catholic perspectives on using animals for human benefit: • there is justification for using animals; Genesis 1:26-28 • others see animal rights as a form of stewardship, balancing using animals for human benefit and avoiding unnecessary harm; Matthew 10:31; Proverbs 12:10 • many accept the use of animals for food; Genesis 9:3 • some Catholics choose vegetarianism or veganism based on teachings such as Genesis 1:26-28.	Catholic beliefs, teachings, and practices about animal rights are based on the belief that animals are part of God's creation (Genesis 1:31), and are entrusted to human care and stewardship (Proverbs 12:10; Exodus 20:10, CCC 2402). Humans have dominion over Creation (Genesis 1:26-28), but the Catholic Church emphasises compassion, respect and responsible treatment of animals, reflecting a moral responsibility to protect and preserve them as God's creation. Pope Francis, in Laudato Si, affirms the idea that animals are part of God's creation and that humans have a duty to protect them. They should not cause them any unnecessary suffering, and so the Church opposes any form of animal cruelty, including harm or exploitation. This is reflected in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which condemns "unnecessary killing of animals" (CCC 2418). In line with Catholic teaching, there is a call to balance human needs with the well-being of animals, advocating for sustainable practices that respect animal habitats and biodiversity. However, while there is justification for using animals for the benefit of humans in Genesis 1:26-28, many Catholics believe that this needs to be balanced with avoiding unnecessary harm to animals (Matthew 10:31, Proverbs 12:10).

	Catholic perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • many argue that it is essential for advancing human health and well-being • most believe it should be done ethically, with efforts to minimize suffering • many support the development of alternatives to animal testing • many call for strict regulations to ensure humane treatment. How the aims and work of Catholic Concern for Animals reflect Catholic beliefs about animal rights.	Many Catholics actively support animal welfare organisations and initiatives that promote humane treatment of animals, including laws protecting animals from abuse. The Church supports ethical treatment of animals in farming and the reduction of animal suffering in food production, advocating for sustainable and humane practices. While most Catholics accept that animals can be used for food (Genesis 9:3), some Catholics may become vegetarian or vegan to avoid harm or suffering to animals during the slaughter process (Genesis 1:26-28). Suggested learning activity: • TeachVine | Veganism in education | Vegan teaching resources - Veganism in Education St. Francis of Assisi is often remembered for his deep reverence for all of God's creation, expressed most famously in his poem Canticle of the Creatures. In this work, Francis reflects on the interconnectedness of all life, praising God for the beauty and harmony of creation. St. Francis believed that all creatures—animals, plants, and humans—are part of a unified creation under God. He emphasised their shared origin and purpose. His famous phrase, "Brother Sun, Sister Moon," highlights his view that creation is interconnected, with all creatures existing in a relationship of mutual dependence and respect. Therefore, all creatures have value and reflect God's glory. Many Catholic communities celebrate events like St. Francis of Assisi's Feast Day (October 4th), which often includes blessings for animals, reflecting the Church's reverence for creation.

		Suggested learning activity:
		• Read the Canticle of the Creatures with the learners. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a section of the canticle (e.g., praise for Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Wind, etc.). Ask groups to discuss:
		  • What does this part of creation represent?
		  • How does it reflect God's goodness or care?
		  • Why might St. Francis have seen it as worthy of praise?
		• Each group could create a visual representation (e.g., a collage, poster, or drawing) of their assigned section, incorporating images or symbols that reflect the theme. Or, they could write their own short "modern canticle" inspired by the original, praising elements of the natural world relevant to today.
		
		Discuss how St. Francis' canticle might inspire Christians today to care for creation. Consider its relevance in addressing modern environmental issues.
		
		Catholic perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research are guided by the principles of stewardship, respect for life, and moral responsibility. The Church acknowledges the potential benefits of research, for example, for advancing human health and well-being, but also stresses the importance of ethical considerations in how animals are treated. The use of animals for research is permissible if it meets certain conditions, particularly when the research has significant benefits to human health, especially in the context of advancing medical treatments and saving lives.

		However, animals should not be subjected to unnecessary or extreme pain and any suffering should be minimised. Animals should always be treated with respect. Research should prioritise alternative methods whenever possible, such as non-invasive studies, to reduce animal harm. The research that contributes to significant medical breakthroughs is supported by the Church, especially when it has the potential to alleviate human suffering. However, this research must be conducted responsibly, respecting both human and animal dignity. Indeed, many Catholics call for strict regulations and legal protection to always ensure humane treatment of animals. Suggested learning activities: • Future of Science: Lesson Plan 1 - Animal Aid • Wasted Lives Student Activities - Animal Aid The mission or aim of Catholic Concern for Animals (CCA) Is *"the advancement of Christian respect and responsibility for the animal creation with special reference to Catholic teaching and beliefs." (from the Catholic Concern for Animals website).* CCA's mission is grounded in the idea of stewardship, and the organisation advocates for the responsible and ethical treatment of animals in areas such as farming, research and entertainment, reflecting the Catholic teaching that humans have a duty to care for and protect the natural world (Genesis 1:28). It emphasises the connection between faith, morality, and the humane treatment of animals. Rooted in Catholic social teaching and the idea of stewardship, CCA seeks to promote respect, care, and justice for animals as part of God's creation. The CCA also educates Catholics and the public about their moral responsibility to treat animals with kindness and respect. They highlight the connection between faith and the way humans interact with animals, encouraging reflection on the ethical implications of daily choices.

		CCA promote plant-based diets, cruelty-free products, and non-animal-based research methods, such as computer modelling and in vitro testing. They also campaign for a move away from using animals for scientific and medical research. Computer modelling involves using advanced computer software to simulate biological systems, diseases, and the effects of drugs on the human body. In vitro testing refers to experiments conducted on cells, tissues, or organs grown in a laboratory environment outside of a living organism. Information and resources on the Catholic Concern for Animals (CCA) can be found here: Catholic Concern for Animals – Catholic Concern for Animals Suggested learning activity: Research the CCA and create an infographic on the work they do and how this reflects Christian beliefs in stewardship.

3.2b Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life - Catholic Christian perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.2.1b What makes us human - Catholic Christian perspectives	Catholic beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • created in God's image; Genesis 1:26-27, The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena (of Discretion) • possess a soul, a spiritual dimension; Matthew 10:28; Ecclesiastes 12:7 • possess autonomy - free will, which comes with moral responsibility; Genesis 3; Romans 2:14-15 • the concept of Original Sin – St Augustine (The Enchiridion 3:11) • Thomas Aquinas – humankind does not choose sinful acts, (Summa Theologica) • fell into sin but have the opportunity to gain redemption and be restored to a right relationship with God, through belief in Jesus; John 3;16.	Catholics believe that human beings were the most important part of God's Creation. Humans are the only species to be created 'imago Dei' or 'in God's image.' (Genesis 1:26) To be created in God's image means that humans reflect certain aspects of God's character, such as love, creativity, morality, and the capacity for relationships. The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena (also known as the "Dialogue of Divine Providence" or the "Book of Divine Doctrine") is a spiritual work that captures the essence of St Catherine's mystical experiences, conversations with God, and reflections on the nature of divine love, grace, and human life. St. Catherine emphasises that humans are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). According to God's revelation to Catherine, humans are intended to reflect God's goodness, holiness, and love. However, sin disrupts this harmony, causing humans to turn away from God. Discretion (or prudence) is seen as the virtue that restores this image, helping humans to live in accordance with God's will and their true nature as creatures designed for communion with Him. St. Catherine explores the human capacity for free will – the ability to choose between good and evil. God, in the Dialogue, teaches that while humans have freedom, they are also accountable for their choices. She highlights that humans are fallen creatures, prone to sin due to Original Sin and personal failures. However, they are also called to seek conversion and renewal, allowing them to make choices that lead to holiness or sin (Genesis 3; Romans 2:14-15).

		• Catholics believe that human beings are the only species to have a soul, or spiritual dimension (Matthew 10:28; Ecclesiastes 12:7, CCC 362-373). The soul is seen the part of humans that lives on in the afterlife and is immortal. It also allows humans to connect with God. In St. Augustine's Enchiridion 3:11, he explores the concept of Original Sin. He teaches that Original Sin originated with Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). According to Augustine, Adam's sin was a pivotal moment that led to the fall of humanity. This led to the inheritance of a corrupted human nature, marked by a tendency toward sin. Therefore, Original Sin is inherited by all humans. He argues that because of Adam's sin, human nature itself has been weakened, and everyone born into the world inherits this fallen state. Augustine emphasises that human beings cannot overcome Original Sin on their own, but need God's grace to be restored, with Christ playing a central role in restoring what was lost due to sin. (CCC 385, 388-389, 396-409). In St. Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica, he affirms that humans have free will, meaning they have the capacity to choose between good and evil. However, human choices are often shaped by passions and disordered desires due to the effects of original sin. Therefore, humans do not willingly sin directly but are inclined to it due to human weakness and ignorance. Sinful acts occur because of lack of knowledge (ignorance) or weakness of the will (concupiscence) rather than a direct, free decision to reject God. Catholics believe that salvation is a gift from God, made possible through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. It involves being restored to a right relationship with God and receiving eternal life in heaven. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid the price for the sins of humanity, ensuring they are redeemed if they accept him as God's son (John 3:16, CCC410-412) and have the opportunity to be reconciled with God.

		A helpful summary of the beliefs in salvation and atonement can be found here: How God Deals With Evil Without Destroying Humanity
3.2.3b Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Catholic Christian perspectives	Catholic perspectives of when life begins: • Catholics believe that human life begins at conception • the embryo is considered a human person at the point of conception • the embryo has inherent dignity and worth; Psalm 139:13-16. Catholic beliefs and teachings about abortion: • that abortion is a grave moral wrong (Pope John Paul II Evangelium Vitae) • the principle of the sanctity of life – made in God's image; Genesis 1:26 • the Catechism of the Catholic Church – that life is a fundamental human right from conception to natural death • all human rights are grounded in the right to life (The Common Good, 1996) • abortion is the taking of an innocent life, forbidden in the Ten Commandments; Exodus 20:13 • the Bible states that God has a plan for each human life and abortion prevents this from taking place; Jeremiah 1:5 • some Catholics may accept abortion in certain circumstances, such as when the mother's life is at risk, in cases of rape or incest, or when severe foetal abnormalities are present, but this is not official Catholic teaching	Catholics believe that human life begins at conception, (CCC 2270) when the egg and sperm meet and fertilise. From this moment, the unborn life is an innocent human individual (CCC2273) that is considered fully human, possessing dignity and intrinsic value. An embryo has inherent dignity and worth; Psalm 139:13-16, CCC 2258. It retains the same rights as any human, and it should be protected and respected at all costs. Catholics believe that God has created all life, and so only he can take it away. Every human being, from conception, is made in the image of God and is therefore sacred. (Genesis 1:27). This belief is called the sanctity of life. Suggested learning activity: • Opinion Line – ask learners when they think life begins and ask them to arrange themselves on the opinion line. Ask them to justify their response to the question. Abortion: The deliberate removal of a foetus from the womb in order to end the pregnancy. In the document, Evangelium Vitae, Pope John Paul II stated clearly that abortion is a direct and intentional termination of life, which means it is a serious sin against the dignity and sanctity of human life. It is a grave moral wrong. The belief that every human life is sacred and holy originates in Genesis 1:26, where humans are described as made in God's image, (imago Dei), giving every person inherent value and dignity.

	• Catholics advocate for alternatives to abortion, such as adoption • The Doctrine of Double Effect allows procedures that may also lead to abortion, but only under very specific circumstances. Catholic beliefs and teachings about euthanasia: • euthanasia is a grave violation of the law of God – Pope John Paul III (Evangelium Vitae, 1995) • Catholics do not accept 'right to die' arguments, as only God has control over life and death • the principle of the sanctity of life – created by God in his image; Genesis 1:26 • strong opposition to active euthanasia viewing this as ending a life given by God; Exodus 20:13 • the belief that suffering and pain do not make a life less valuable or sacred • the importance of 'dying well' and to show compassion for those who are suffering; Galatians 6:2 • strong support for palliative care and hospices • concerns about the 'slippery slope' argument. The Doctrine of Double Effect allows for treatment to be given that may cause death, but only in very specific situations	In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Catholics are taught that life is a fundamental human right. It begins at the moment of conception and must be respected and protected until natural death, affirming the holiness of all stages of life. This right to life is fundamental, and all other rights stem from this. Therefore, in the Common Good (1996), the Catholic Church teaches that protecting all life is a moral priority for Catholics. Abortion is seen as breaking the commandment "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13), as it involves the deliberate killing of an innocent unborn child (CCC 2270). God has a plan and purpose for every life, as seen in Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." Abortion prevents this plan from taking place. Some Catholics may accept abortion in exceptional circumstances, such as when the mother's life is at risk, in cases of rape, or severe foetal abnormalities, such as a serious disability. However, while there may be a variety of individual perspectives within the Catholic community on issues such as abortion, official Catholic teaching states very clearly that abortion is intrinsically wrong. The Catholic Church would promote alternatives to abortion, such as adoption, believing it offers a positive solution while supporting both the mother and child. They may work with or support organisations that provide help and resources for expectant mothers, such as Care for the Family or the Pregnancy Crisis Helpline. The Doctrine of Double Effect is a moral principle that is used in very specific circumstances. An action may have two effects: one intended and good, and another unintended but foreseen and harmful. The primary purpose of the action must be good, even though a negative effect may occur, and the bad effect must not be intended. In other words, it is unavoidable but not directly willed. The good effect must outweigh the bad: The positive outcome must be proportionate to, or greater than, the negative effect.

		For example, a woman may undergo treatment that saves her life but indirectly results in the loss of her unborn child. The primary intention is to save the mother's life, not to harm the child. Suggested learning activities: • Opinionnaire – Give learners a table with statements about abortion. Ask them to give their opinion on each statement, and state if the statement is true or false and why. They then need to read some information about abortion and write the correct answers (true/false with evidence) for each statement. • Card sort – reasons for and against abortion • Venn diagram – compare and contrast two religious views on abortion, for example Catholic Christianity and Judaism. • Case studies – Read the case studies and respond to each one from a personal viewpoint, and from the viewpoint of the religions studied. What are the rights and wrongs of abortion? - BBC Teach Good Learning in RE 7 Responsible for Abortion 13-15s.pdf (natre.org.uk) Euthanasia: From the Greek meaning 'good death', it is sometimes called 'mercy killing'. It means ending a person's life in order to bring an end to their suffering, e.g. if they have a terminal illness. In Evangelium Vitae (1995), Pope John Paul II, declared euthanasia to be a grave violation of God's law, as it intentionally ends a human life, thereby conflicting with the sanctity of life. Catholics hold that all human life is sacred because it is created in God's image, giving it intrinsic value and dignity (Genesis 1:26, CCC 2258). Catholics therefore oppose the idea of a "right to die," believing that only God has the authority and power to decide when life begins and ends (CCC 2280-2283).

		For Catholics, ending life through active euthanasia breaks the commandment “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13), as it is a deliberate ending of a life and goes against God’s will. Catholics believe that pain and suffering do not reduce a person’s worth or the holiness of their life (CCC 2276-2277). Any suffering a person goes through has spiritual meaning and value when united with Christ’s suffering. Catholics would encourage a person going through a time of suffering to offer this to God through prayer. The Catholic Church strongly supports palliative care and hospices, (CCC 2279) which provide dignity and comfort for a person coming to the end of their life. They see palliative care as an opportunity to "carry each other’s burdens" (Galatians 6:2), showing love and support to those who are suffering. Many Catholics are concerned that legally allowing euthanasia could lead to its misuse, devaluing life and pressuring vulnerable people to end their lives prematurely. In specific situations, actions that may unintentionally bring about death are morally acceptable, as long as the primary intention is to alleviate suffering and not to cause death. However, this is not the same as euthanasia and should not be seen as an acceptance of the premature hastening of the death of a person. Suggested learning activities: • The View from the Classroom - Euthanasia - TrueTube • Euthanasia: Playing God? - TrueTube • Should assisted suicide be legalised? | Religious Studies - Matters of Life and Death - YouTube • P4C stimulus: NATRE Music - euthanasia

3.3b Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth - Catholic Christian perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.3.1b Freedom of religious expression - Catholic Christian perspectives	Learners should understand: Catholic beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression: • the Great Commission Jesus' instruction to share the faith with others. • this is part of humanity's God-given free will • Catholics are instructed to evangelise – Pope Francis (Evangelii Gaudium 15. 48-49, 197-198, 264-265) • the importance of people of other faiths having the same right to religious expression; Matthew 7:12 • the role of the Catholic Church in inter-faith dialogue it is the duty to speak about their faith, even in the face of opposition; Acts 4:19-20 • many Catholics are sensitive to the right to religious expression based on their own history of persecution • religious expression should be allowed in public spaces, includes the freedom to pray, wear religious symbols, and participate in religious activities; Matthew 5:14-16.	The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) refers to the final instruction Jesus gave his disciples, to share the faith with others and to baptise them. Catholics believe they should evangelise and share their faith with others in order to fulfil this instruction. Pope Francis confirmed this belief in his document 'Evangelii Gaudium' (The Joy of the Gospel, 15). Catholics believe in the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12), which calls for treating others as we would want to be treated. This means they respect the freedom of other religious faiths to practise and express their beliefs (CCC 1905-1917). Catholics believe that human beings are created with free will, a gift from God, allowing individuals to choose their own beliefs and actions (CCC 1747, 1907). This includes the right to accept or reject faith, emphasising the importance of respecting others' religious freedom. Inspired by Acts 4:19-20, Catholics see it as their duty to witness to their faith and share the truth of the Gospel, even when faced with opposition. They also recognise the importance of dialogue with other faiths, aiming to build mutual understanding and respect. Many Catholics are sensitive to religious freedom because of their own history of persecution, such as during the early Church and more recent periods of religious intolerance. For example, during the English Reformation in the 16th & 17th centuries, Catholics in England were persecuted for refusing to accept the authority of the Church of England, which had broken away from the Catholic Church. Catholics were subjected to severe punishments, including imprisonment, torture, and execution.

		For example, Saint Thomas More, a prominent Catholic and former Chancellor of England, was executed in 1535 for refusing to recognise King Henry VIII as the Supreme Head of the Church of England. The persecution continued for many years, and Catholics were often barred from holding public office, practicing their faith freely, or attending Catholic Mass. This history of discrimination and persecution has contributed to the Catholic commitment to protect and defend religious expression for all. Catholics advocate for the freedom to pray, wear religious symbols, such as a crucifix or cross, and participate in religious activities in public spaces. They believe that religious expression is a fundamental human right that should be respected in a diverse society (Matthew 5:14-16, CCC 1738-1742). Suggested learning activity: • Case Study Analysis – Present real-life examples of legal cases, such as rulings on wearing religious symbols in public spaces or faith schools in the UK. Learners work in pairs to analyse the case, identify key issues, and discuss how they would resolve the situation.
3.3.2b The use of personal wealth - Catholic Christian perspectives	Catholic beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • this is linked to stewardship and should reflect God's purposes and values • at Mass, Catholics are called upon to contribute to the collection, if they can afford it • wealth is often viewed as a blessing that comes with great responsibility; Matthew 25:14-30	Wealth is not evenly spread out across society in Wales. Some people are much richer than others. Catholics believe that being wealthy is not wrong but ethical consideration must be given to their acquisition and use of their wealth. They have a duty to manage their resources as part of their stewardship (CCC 2401-2405). Wealth is therefore a blessing that comes with great responsibility. (Matthew 25:14-30, CCC 2407-2409, 2419-2436). Catholics also believe that a person's value should be judged on their actions and not by what they possess or the amount they have.

	• warnings about the dangers of greed and the love of money; 1 Timothy 6:10 • wealth for its own sake is often viewed as incompatible with a life of faith; Matthew 19:24 • Christians cannot serve both God and money; Matthew 6:24 • Pope Francis stated “Money must serve, not rule” (2024) • a reminder to focus on storing up “treasures in heaven” rather than on earth; Matthew 6:19-21 • loving money will never bring real satisfaction; Ecclesiastes 5:10 • Catholic monks and nuns such as the Franciscans, advocate a life that is less focused on money and more on spiritual values. • some Catholic monks and nuns swear a vow of poverty.	When Catholics attend Mass, they are usually given the opportunity to give a voluntary contribution or donation to support the church’s mission. There is no obligation to give to the collection, but many Catholics are pleased to do so if they can afford to. This is then included as part of the offertory procession, to show the communal offering of gifts to God. Just as the bread and wine are presented as offerings to God for the Eucharist, the collection of money represents the faithful’s material gifts, which are offered in gratitude for God’s blessings and support for the work of the Church. The money is used to fund the needs of the Church, charitable works, and the upkeep of the liturgy and community, reflecting the principle of stewardship. This act also encourages active participation in the worship, as the congregation offers both their prayers and material resources to God. In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus warns his disciples that money can take the place of God in their lives and that they must be careful to remain faithful to him. In the Parable of the Rich Man, a rich young ruler wanted to follow Jesus and was told to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor. Jesus said in this parable that it is ‘easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.’ (Matthew 19:24). This means that wealth for its own sake is incompatible with a life of faith. In Matthew 25:14-30 (Parable of the Talents), wealth is seen as a blessing that must be wisely managed and shared for God’s purposes. Matthew 6:24 warns against focusing on money rather than God, emphasising the need for devotion to God above all else. Indeed, Pope Francis reflects this teaching in his message to Moneyval in 2020, when he said that ‘Money must serve, not rule.’ Ecclesiastes 5:10 also teaches that loving money will never bring lasting happiness. Jesus also taught that wealth doesn’t make people happy and can lead to greed. 1 Timothy 6:10 warns that excessive desire for wealth leads to spiritual harm.

		Catholics believe that wealth is a gift from God and should be used responsibly to care for others and the world, as part of their duty of stewardship. All the Gospels taught that Jesus wanted his followers to care for the poor. In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, he teaches that God will judge people, not on how much wealth they have, but on how they have treated the poor. The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-30) also reinforces this point and explains that wealth itself has no benefit in the afterlife; it is how wealth is used in this life that matters. Matthew 6:19-21 encourages focusing on eternal rewards rather than accumulating earthly possessions. Any wealth should be gained and used in a way that is pleasing to God, for example, promoting generosity, justice, and compassion for those in need. (CCC 2443-2449) Today, members of religious orders, such as monks, nuns, religious brothers and sisters, as part of their religious commitment, take a vow of poverty. (CCC 2101-2103) This vow means they reject personal ownership of material goods and live in community with shared resources. The vow reflects their belief that attachment to wealth can distract from their devotion to God and their mission of serving others. Catholic monks and nuns, such as the Franciscans, embrace a lifestyle that prioritises prayer and service to others, rather than accumulating wealth. Their life is centred around simplicity and devotion to God, rather than material pursuits. Suggested learning activities: • Inference grid – Group work • Assign each group a key Bible passage (e.g., Matthew 6:19-21, 1 Timothy 6:10, or Matthew 25:14-30). Ask learners to use the inference grid to help them summarise the passage. Discuss what it teaches about the use of wealth and its implications for Catholics today. Groups share their insights with the class, and the teacher facilitates a discussion on the relevance of these teachings in modern life.

		• Scenarios – Present learners with real-life scenarios where wealth and values intersect, such as deciding how to spend a large inheritance or balancing personal needs with charitable giving. • Ask learners to respond to each one in the light of Catholic teachings. They could compare this with their own view. Religious Orders: Divide learners into small groups and assign each group one of the following tasks: Group 1: Research the Franciscan Order and its vow of poverty. How do Franciscans live out simplicity and spiritual values? What is their mission? Group 2: Research the vow of poverty in other religious orders (e.g., Benedictines, Carmelites). How does the vow of poverty influence their daily lives? Group 3: Compare the life of a monk/nun with a modern lifestyle focused on wealth and material goods. What are the differences in priorities, goals, and values? Creative Reflection: After the group research, ask each group to create a visual representation (e.g., poster or digital infographic) showing the key aspects of a monk's or nun's life. Include the values of poverty, simplicity, prayer, and service, and compare these with the pursuit of wealth in modern society. Reflection: What challenges might monks and nuns face in living a life of poverty? How do these values of simplicity and spiritual focus help monks and nuns grow closer to God? Do you think there are lessons that we can apply from their lifestyle to our own lives today? Reflection: As a final activity, ask learners to write a short reflection on how focusing less on money and more on spiritual values could impact their own lives. Would they find it challenging or fulfilling? Why?

Buddhism

3.4a Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth – Buddhist perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.4.1a Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Buddhist perspectives	Buddhist beliefs, teachings and attitudes about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • Dependent Origination (Pratityasamutpada) – inter-dependency • all living things should be respected • humanity affects the environment and the environment affects humanity • the concept of karma teaches that all actions have positive or negative consequences • the concept of Right Action teaches Buddhists to avoid harming the environment • the second of the Five Precepts warns against taking what is not freely given, including from the environment. How the aims and work of Eco Dharma Network reflects Buddhist beliefs about caring for the natural world.	Buddhists believe in Dependent Origination (Pratityasamutpada) – commonly translated as inter-dependency, but it can also be understood as conditioned co-production and dependent arising. This concept emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things, suggesting that they are mutually related and dependent on one another. Buddhists often use the phrase 'when this arises, that arises, when this ceases, that ceases' to illustrate this principle. Another visual representation of this teaching is the Tibetan Wheel of Life, which is introduced in Unit 1. They believe all living things should be respected. The first Precept of Buddhism advises against intentionally harming any living being, encompassing all sentient beings, including animals. Scientists also believe that birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and insects possess sentience, prompting Buddhists to extend respect and refrain from intentionally harming or killing them. Due to the belief in Dependent Origination, Buddhists believe that harming one part of the environment is equivalent to harming the entire ecosystem. Humanity affects the environment and the environment affects humanity. According to Buddhist teachings, the self and nature are inseparable. The Buddha emphasised that the individual is not an isolated entity but rather interconnected with the world around them. For instance, deforestation disrupts ecosystems and contributes to climate change, which negatively impacts global temperatures, leading to droughts and floods. These events can alter the availability of food, restrict the amount of work a worker can accomplish, and ultimately reduce a country's productivity.

		Karma, the belief in cause and effect, necessitates Buddhist mindfulness in their interactions with the environment. The concept of karma teaches that all actions have positive or negative consequences, if humans damage the environment this cases issues such as the struggle of bees and pollinating insects to survive, which could impact the availability of food for humans. Unlike the belief in a creator God who grants stewardship, Buddhists view caring for the environment as a way to accumulate positive karma. https://friendsoftheearth.uk/bees#:~:text=Bees – information about Friends of the Earth's campaign to raise awareness of the need to save bees https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c91aqzrVtDE (Friends of the Earth – The Bee Cause campaign at the National Theatre, Greenstream TV) – Friends of the Earth organised a one-day event to highlight the plight of honeybees in the UK. They transformed a bare, concrete area into a wildflower meadow, showcasing how simple it is to convert urban environments into green zones that not only benefit the fauna and flora but also people. Learning to live simply and in harmony with the world will bring about positive benefits for the entire environment. Buddhists believe that they can utilise nature to create useful things, but they must refrain from exploiting it unnecessarily. The Dhammapada emphasises the importance of avoiding evil and instead, promoting good. The concept of Right Action teaches Buddhists to avoid harming the environment. Right Action involves refraining from harmful behaviour. Buddha encouraged his followers to lead a forest life and prevented them from destroying the forest, recognising that humans depend on the world around them. It can also involve raising awareness about the significance of environmental issues, e.g., Thich Nhat Hanh held meditation retreats stressing the value of deep, inner peace for environmental activists.

		The second of the Five Precepts warns against taking what is not freely given, including from the environment. The second precept goes beyond mere stealing and theft of personal belongings. It also encompasses an abuse of the planet's resources. Therefore, Buddhists must exercise caution in their farming practices, adopting a fallow farming technique to allow land to recover and accumulate organic matter. Eco Dharma Network, established in 2019, was created in response to the urgent climate crisis. As a network of Buddhist communities, they provide a platform to enhance collective capacity to take climate action and coordinate various initiatives. It's a working group established as part of Faith for the Climate and Religion for Peace. Its objective is to enhance the sangha's ability to take climate action. In June 2024, the report focused on ethical banking and investment, shedding light on the fact that several UK banks are significant financiers of coal, oil, and gas projects that directly contribute to the climate crisis. https://www.nbo.org.uk/eco-dharma-network/ (brief outline of their work) Suggested Learning Activities: • In pairs, produce an infographic to show why bees are so important. Make sure an explanation of interdependence (pratitya samutpada) is demonstrated. https://friendsoftheearth.uk/bees#:~:text=Bees, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c91aqzrVtDE • Research activity: https://www.nbo.org.uk/eco-dharma-network/ - produce an information leaflet highlighting the aims of the Eco Dharma Network

			• Consider a quote by Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese monk: "What we need most is to hear within us the sound of the Earth crying" ('Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth p.245). What is the quote trying to tell us? How does it illustrate the Buddhist concept of pratitya samutpada? How does it link in with teachings about Right Action and the Precepts?
3.4.2a	Animal rights – Buddhist perspectives	Buddhist beliefs, teachings and practices about animal rights: • the status of human beings is no higher than that of other living beings • human compassion, wisdom and loving kindness must be extended to all living beings (Dhammapada 129) • the First Precept teaches the concept of ahimsa • the principle of Right Action – harming animals would accrue negative karma • animals are also part of the cycle of samsara. • being re-born as an animal is due to bad karma in past lives and considered a serious spiritual setback • animals cannot improve their karmic status. They must continue to be re-born as an animal until their bad karma has been used up. Buddhist perspectives on using animals for human benefit: • the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) was not a vegetarian and did not teach his followers to be vegetarian • some say the First Precept refers more to direct killing than the indirect killing of animals for food • eating meat is another example of the reality of dukkha • vegetarianism avoids causing suffering (ahimsa) • vegetarianism avoids industrial farming which can lead to climate change/environmental damage	Buddhists don't believe that God created the world, so they don't see animals' purpose as being valuable to, or supporting, humans. Buddhists believe that the status of human beings is no higher than that of other living beings. Animals are believed to be sentient beings; the concept of rebirth suggests that humans could potentially be reborn as animals, and vice versa. The treatment of animals demonstrates Buddhists' understanding of their connection with the natural world. The Buddha taught that sentient beings currently residing in the animal kingdom could have been their mothers, brothers, sisters, fathers, children, and friends in previous rebirths. Consequently, it's impossible to draw a clear distinction between moral guidelines applicable to animals and those applicable to humans. Ultimately, humans and animals belong to the same family, and they are all interconnected. https://www.worldanimalprotection.ca/blogs/what-is-animal-sentience/#:~:text=Mammals (World Animal Protection) They believe that human compassion, wisdom and loving kindness must be extended to all living beings (Dhammapada 129) Buddha taught that all animals experience fear when confronted with death, making it crucial for Buddhists to embrace this wisdom and strive to live in accordance with the principles of compassion (karuna) and loving-kindness (meta). This practice can influence their career choices (right livelihood), as actions that cause harm or kill animals are viewed negatively.

	• the concept of 'Right Livelihood' teaches that Buddhists should avoid work that involves killing or harming animals. Buddhist perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • many Buddhists agree with the UK Animal Welfare Sentience Act of 2022 • experimenting on animals is morally wrong if the animal concerned might come to any harm • many acknowledge the value that animal experiments may have for human health • some would point to drugs tested on animals damaging human health • the experimenter must accept the negative karma of carrying out the experiment • experiment only for a morally good purpose • experiment only on animals where there is no alternative • design the experiment to do as little harm as possible • avoid killing the animal unless it is absolutely necessary • treat the animals kindly and respectfully. How the aims and work Dharma Voices for Animals reflect Buddhist beliefs about animal rights.	They can accept that animals have a role to play (e.g., producing milk) and by demonstrating karuna and meta, Buddhists accumulate positive karma. Buddhists practice meditation to cultivate feelings of loving-kindness towards all living beings, recognising that they all have the right to happiness (sukkha). Ignoring the suffering of animals leads to the development of negative thoughts and habits. The First Precept of ahimsa, which generally prohibits causing harm to any living being, leads Buddhists to prioritise the well-being of animals. They perceive animal cruelty as accumulating negative karma. While most Buddhists support animal welfare organisations, they would oppose violent protests that result in harm to humans. The First Precept (ahimsa), which is linked to Right Action in the morality (sila) section of the Eightfold Path, seems pertinent. Similarly, the Second Precept (refraining from taking what has not been given) holds significance, as animals naturally strive to avoid death (Dhammapada 129). Violating this precept by taking an animal's life would result in negative karma. Moreover, the principle of Right Intention is crucial when accumulating karma; a negative intention leads to negative actions and negative karma. This can link to the Right Effort section of the Path as it requires the effort to abandon negative ways of thinking. Animals are also part of the cycle of samsara. Buddhists place great significance on the natural world, viewing all living beings as interconnected and dependent on one another. Consequently, they treat animals with compassion, recognising that they are also part of the cycle of rebirth (samsara). The Jataka Tales recount a story where the Buddha, upon enlightenment, was able to recall numerous past lives in samsara, including many as animals.

		Some Buddhists believe that being reborn as an animal is a consequence of unskilful actions in a previous life, resulting in negative karma. This notion implies that animals are spiritually inferior to humans, as only rebirth as a human allows for the pursuit of enlightenment. Some Buddhists believe that since animals lack the ability to engage in conscious self-improvement, they will perpetually be reborn as animals until their karmic debt is fully repaid. Only when they are reborn as humans can they resume their path to enlightenment. The Tibetan Wheel of Life illustrates the six realms and how each advancement on the wheel is dependent upon the previous realm (pratitya samutpada). Notably, none of these realms are permanent. Some Buddhists interpret the animal realm as a manifestation of our instinctive nature. Suggested Learning Activities: • Before beginning the topic, ask pupils to work in pairs or small groups and discuss the idea of whether humans are 'better' than animals or vice versa. Encourage them to share their opinions on the purpose of animals. Create a list of acceptable and unacceptable ways humans use animals. • Word Bingo: Ask pupils to draw a 3x3 grid, large enough to write a key term & explanation in each square. Write in the following terms: sentient, interconnected, karuna, meta, ahimsa, right action, samsara, karma, Jataka Takes. Teacher picks a random word & pupils write in the meaning of that word in the correct box, or teacher can give the meaning and pupils have to match it with the correct word. • Use the words from the Word Bingo activity to explain Buddhist beliefs, teachings, and practices related to animal rights. Guide pupils to write a paragraph on each of the following: beliefs, teachings, and practices. Highlight the words from the Word Bingo activity in the answer.

		• Read Dhammapada 129, write it in own words, in a way that will be remembered. Explain how it might inspire Buddhists to promote animal rights. After his enlightenment, the Buddha accepted any kind of alms food offered to him, showing respect for the almsgiver's karma earned through this charitable act. Theravada teachings emphasise that the Buddha refrained from mandating vegetarianism as part of the *Vinaya*, the monastic code. Instead, he instructed monks and nuns to accept any alms food offered with good intentions, without discrimination. However, according to a Mahayana sutra (*Mahaparinirvana Sutra*), the Buddha's final teaching emphasises that his followers should refrain from consuming any form of meat or fish. Many Mahayana Buddhists also believe that even vegetarian food that has come into contact with meat should be thoroughly washed before consumption. Killing is strictly prohibited in the Buddhist monastic code (*Vinaya*), and therefore, consuming meat from an animal slaughtered for one's own consumption is entirely taboo. However, a monk is permitted to eat meat from an animal that has been slaughtered by someone else, provided that the butcher did not intend to kill the animal for the monk's sustenance. Despite the First Precept emphasising the avoidance of harming any living being, some Buddhists accept the necessity of killing animals for food when it becomes their sole source of sustenance, or when the butcher is not a Buddhist. Many Buddhists argue that consuming meat underscores the reality of dukkha, as it involves causing pain to animals for food. Dukkha manifests in various forms, and for some Buddhists, it may manifest as the desire for things to be different. However, for others, killing animals for meat is an essential aspect of life. The Dharma provides guidance on overcoming dukkha through the control of intentions and actions. However, many Buddhists point out that eating meat demonstrates a lack of self-control, suggesting that there will be no respite from dukkha.

		Furthermore, some Buddhists believe that the dukkha resulting from the need to eat meat may lead to the generation of negative karma. As far as Buddhism is concerned, abstaining from meat (vegetarianism) is a way to prevent animals from suffering. This aligns with the teaching of ahimsa (non-violence, not harming any living being), making it a means of generating positive karma. Buddhists believe in showing respect to animals because they may have been humans in a past life and have the potential to become humans in a future rebirth. Buddhists, in addition to being vegetarian as a way to show respect for all living beings, also believe that abstaining from meat helps prevent the intensive farming of animals that can harm the planet. Plant-based foods require less energy (and produce fewer emissions) compared to animal products. By adopting a vegetarian diet, humans can contribute to reducing pollution in streams, rivers, and oceans. Livestock production is a major source of pollution, primarily due to animal waste that can contaminate waterways, harm ecosystems, destroy soil, and pollute the air, posing risks to both humans and wildlife. https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220429-the-climate-benefits-of-veganism-and-vegetarianism Within the Morality (sila) section of the Eightfold Path, Buddhists are advised to follow Right Livelihood. This principle guides them towards professions that minimise harm and uphold ethical principles. It involves working in ways that avoid causing harm or killing animals. For instance, jobs such as butchery or scientific research involving animal experiments would be considered ‘wrong’ livelihoods.

		Suggested Learning Activities: • In pairs, read through the article: https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220429-the-climate-benefits-of-veganism-and-vegetarianism. Make notes explaining the terms vegetarianism, vegan and CO2. Ask pupils to create 5 questions that their teacher might ask about what has been learnt from the article. • Design a questionnaire that could be given to a Buddhist asking them about their attitudes about whether animals should be used to benefit humans. Think carefully about the tone of the questions i.e., are they respectful? Do they consider that different Buddhists might have different attitudes? https://www.buddhistdoor.net/news/new-uk-law-to-formally-recognize-animals-as-sentient-beings/ (Craig C Lewis, Buddhist Door Global) Article with link to YouTube video – Animals and the Buddha. Video lasts 50 minutes) The legislation applies to a specific set of living beings, excluding all transient beings. Sentience refers to the ability to experience feelings and sensations, so the law applies to vertebrates other than humans and animals; cephalopod molluscs, such as octopuses, squids, and cuttlefish that are commonly found in UK waters, decapod crustaceans, including lobsters, crabs, shrimp, prawns, and crayfish are considered sentient whilst insects and marine invertebrates are not included in this category. https://www.facebook.com/DefraGovUK/videos/animals-have-feelings-the-animal-welfare-sentience-bill-will-recognise-in-law-th/749584829016272/ thttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER7enVaTlrk (MP Dr Neil Hudson backs new Animal Welfare Bill)

		Buddhists oppose animal experiments, believing that every animal's life is equally precious as that of humans. Recognising the interconnectedness of all living beings, they argue that caring for animals can improve human well-being. If experiments were to proceed, all Buddhists would agree that the animals involved should be treated with kindness and compassion and should not be killed if possible. Some Buddhists would approve of using animals in medical research if the benefits to human health were substantial and if there were no viable alternatives. They might argue that the negative consequences of conducting the experiments should be weighed against the potential reduction in human suffering that such research could bring about. Millions of people alive today have benefitted from animal experimentation. Polio, smallpox, diphtheria, cholera, and measles are no longer the major threats to public health that they once were. For several years, heart surgeons have utilised mechanical valves crafted from cow or pig heart tissue, which are harvested from freshly slaughtered animals. More recently, pigs have undergone genetic modifications (incorporating human DNA) to produce organs suitable for human transplantation. https://apnews.com/article/pig-heart-transplant-6651614cb9d73bada8eea2ecb6449aef Drugs tested on animals aren't always safe for humans. For instance, in 2006, a volunteer in a drug trial had to have all his fingers and toes amputated due to a severe reaction to a drug that had been tested on animals without any adverse effects. https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/elephant-man-drug-trial-victim-set-to-win-ps2m-payout-for-injuries-6627033.html

		The Eightfold Path advises Buddhists to pursue Right Livelihood. Therefore, many argue that a job that involves treating animals cruelly and subjecting them to painful experiments contradicts this teaching. In such cases, the individual conducting the experiments must acknowledge that they are accumulating negative karma. "*According to Buddhism all beings - human, animal or otherwise - is precious and all have the same right to happiness. For this reason I find it disgraceful that animals are used without being shown the slightest compassion, and that they are used for scientific experiments. I have also noticed that this who lack any compassion for animals and who do not hesitate to kill them are also those who sooner or later, show a lack of compassion towards human beings.*" Dalai Lama (Beyond Dogma: the challenge of the modern world) While many Buddhists disagree with the principle of experimenting on animals, they would accept it if they believed the purpose and outcomes were morally good. In the UK, testing cosmetics and toiletries on animals has been illegal since 1998. However, in many countries with significant Buddhist populations, such as China, it is not illegal for a supplier to conduct animal tests on its products. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-65484552 (article about UK government changing a policy to allow animal testing for make-up ingredients despite a 25-year ban) Animal testing, though not banned in the UK, is illegal if there are alternative research methods. By law, new medicines must undergo animal testing before human trials. While Buddhists may oppose animal testing, they acknowledge that in certain cases, alternative options may not exist. However, they argue that advancements in computer modelling, and simulations can now predict the effects of chemicals and drugs, providing viable alternatives to animal experimentation.

		The principles of the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement) were developed over five decades to establish a framework for conducting more humane animal research. The National Council for the 3Rs (NC3Rs) is a UK national organisation dedicated to advancing the 3Rs by prioritising their scientific implications and benefits. Although the fundamental definitions were outlined in the book "*The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique" by Russell and Burch,* the NC3Rs has since updated them e.g., the use of predictive models to replace animal research where they're otherwise used; the use of robust, reproducible animal experiments designed and analysed appropriately; to advance animal welfare in the lab to minimise pain, suffering, and distress, and improve its impact on experiment outcomes. https://nc3rs.org.uk/who-we-are/3rs#:~:text=Refinement-,What (The Principles of the 3Rs: Pioneering Better Science) Many Buddhists accept that animal experimentation is necessary in some cases. In line with the First Precept, they would call for animals to be treated with respect and compassion and, where possible, keep the animal alive. In many cases, the animals are killed after an experiment is over so that their tissues and organs can continue to be examined. According to the First Precept, animals should be treated with kindness (karuna), even if they're being used for experimentation. They recognise the value of the animal's life and understand that it's being used with the potential to benefit humans. Buddhists believe that animals mirror the belief that the physical and spiritual realms aren't so distinct, so they should still show respect for them. https://www.tiktok.com/@worldanimalprotection/video/7375208589394300193 Social Media Against Cruelty Coalition (World Animal Protection) Example of how people can show respect to animals by not sharing content on social media.

		Dharma Voices for Animals is the world's sole international Buddhist animal rights and advocacy organisation, was founded in 2011 by an American lawyer who practices Buddhism and teaches the Dharma. Its mission is to collaborate with Buddhists to translate the Buddha's teachings into practical actions. While DVA is a global organisation, its primary focus is on Asia, where over 98% of Buddhists reside. Their efforts encompass dietary modifications, advocating for animal and welfare legislation, providing veterinary care, and collaborating with restaurants to transition towards vegan business models. DVA remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding the Buddha's teachings and ending animal suffering within Dharma communities. Suggested Learning Activities: • Read through the information on the people who run DVA and pick out what they have in common. Compare their backgrounds – what do you think makes them want to work for DVA? https://www.dharmavoicesforanimals.org/ • Watch parts/all of the video Animals and the Buddha https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0MWAAykFuc Teachers might want to pick out the most relevant parts of the video, or make it a homework task to prepare for the lesson on DVA.At 4 mins 31 secs features a Buddhist monk in Wales (Venerable Bhante Bodhidhamma). Watch at least six different people discuss their perspectives. • Take notes on the views of some or all of the Buddhists in the video, providing reasons for those views if possible. Ask a learner to read out the view they most agree with, and another learner to read out the view they disagree with the most. They can stand at opposite ends of the classroom to represent the gap between their views. Classmates can suggest why those two learners might hold those views. The activity can continue until all learners have had an opportunity to express their own views or until all the views from the video have been covered.

		• Read through attitudes toward animal testing and explain why Buddhists might not approve of testing animals for cosmetic purposes. https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/65532759#:~:text=Animal https://www.peta.org.uk/features/animal-testing-cosmetics/ • Read through the article about alternatives to animal testing and explain why Buddhists might approve. https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/laboratory/replacinganimals#:~:text=Alternatives

3.5a What makes us human and related medical ethics – Buddhist perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.5.1a What makes us human – Buddhist perspectives	Buddhist attitudes, beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • Buddha-nature: that all have the potential to achieve Nirvana (enlightenment) • Mahayana – The concept of Buddhahood • Theravada – The concept of Arhathood • recognising and avoiding the Three Poisons • recognising the Three Marks of Existence • seeking Nirvana through Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.	The Mahayana Buddhist belief in the buddha-nature (*tathagatagarbha*) posits that all humans possess the inherent potential to attain enlightenment. This potential is often compared to an acorn, which, under the right circumstances, can transform into an oak tree. Just as an acorn has the potential to become an oak tree, all individuals have the potential to become enlightened if the conditions are favourable. The ideal figure in Mahayana Buddhism is that of the bodhisattva, one who has realised their buddhahood. The Lotus Sutra (a Mahayana scripture) taught that anyone can attain buddhahood in this lifetime, rather than being reborn through many rounds of samsara before perfecting the Buddhist path and eliminating dukkha. In most Mahayana schools, the state of nirvana is synonymous with becoming a buddha. Bodhisattvas delay their final, complete nirvana (parinirvana) until they have helped other people to enlightenment. The ideal figure in Theravada Buddhism is the arhat, also known as the 'worthy one.' An arhat is an enlightened individual who has comprehended the true essence of existence and attained nirvana. Typically, arhats are monks who have dedicated countless lifetimes to diligently adhering to the Eightfold Path and the Dharma, striving to overcome suffering. By transcending the shackles of attachment, arhats are liberated from the cycle of samsara and are not reborn into it. Humans are susceptible to the Three Poisons: greed, hatred, and ignorance. These are the fundamental causes of suffering and the primary impediments to enlightenment. They manifest as the ego's preoccupation with itself; humans desire to acquire and retain what they perceive as beneficial for themselves (greed); they detest what is detrimental to them (hatred); and they remain indifferent to matters that do not directly impact their personal lives (ignorance).

		Buddha's teachings emphasise the importance of recognising the realities of the Three Poisons so that they may be avoided and overcome. The Buddha taught that all lives are characterised by impermanence (anicca), the absence of a permanent self or soul (anatta), and suffering (dukkha). By acknowledging impermanence, Buddhists come to terms with the inevitability of death and suffering as part of life. Understanding that everything is subject to change fosters a realisation that nothing is permanent, emphasising the transience of all existence. The belief in the absence of a permanent self or soul (anatta) often leads Buddhists to refer to energy or essence being reborn rather than a soul. Recognising the universal suffering of all beings can serve as a powerful motivator for Buddhists to overcome dukkha. Dukkha encompasses a wide range of emotional, physical, and mental suffering and pain, arising from attachments to people and things, leading to the expectation of permanence. To progress on the path to Nirvana or enlightenment, Buddhists seek refuge in the Buddha, his teachings (the Dharma), and the community of lay and monastic Buddhists (the Sangha). These three cornerstones of Buddhism, known as the Three Jewels or the Three Refuges, are considered precious and offer safety and protection to Buddhists. Many Buddhists incorporate chanting the *Triratna* (the Three Refuges) into their meditation practices or as a way to reaffirm their faith. The *Triratna* is a sacred phrase that encapsulates the refuge sought: "I seek refuge in the Buddha, in the Dharma, and in the Sangha." Suggested Learning Activities: • Sorting cards – have 9 cards with the marks of existence (anicca, anatta, dukkha), the refuges (Buddha, dharma, sangha) and poisons (greed, hatred, ignorance) and 9 cards with a description of each. In pairs, groups match them up. As they match cards, tell partner/group why each one is part of what makes us human.

		• Pass the Mind-Map – give each pupil a sheet of paper and a coloured pen/pencil. In the middle of the sheet write buddha-nature, buddhahood or arhathood (these words can be used on multiple sheets). When activity starts each learner must write a fact/key point/keyword/example/information about that topic. Then they swap with someone close by. Keep doing this until all pupils have written on more than 5 sheets. Direct learners to reread the comments and provide a justification or opposition to one of them. Once the sheet returns to the first person, they can ask the person who made a judgment a question. Listen to the judgments made and vote on the strongest or most relevant one. • Analyse and evaluate whether having the buddha-nature makes attaining enlightenment easy. • Revision/recap – on post-it notes, invite pupils to jot down answers to some/all of the following prompts: 2 things I'd like to know more about, 1 thing I know now that I didn't before, 2 things I will definitely remember, 1 thing that surprised me, 2 questions I'd like to ask, 1 way I could improve my work, 2 sentences that would summarise this lesson.
3.5.2a Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Buddhist perspectives	Buddhist beliefs and teachings about abortion: • the cycle of samsara means there is no point at which a foetus or embryo is not living • human life is precious as only humans can reveal the buddha-nature or attain arhathood • the first of the Five Precepts teaches against taking a life • the principle of ahimsa guides against causing harm to living beings • Precepts and principles are only guidelines, not rules or moral laws • abortion is usually a complex issue and the complexity of each situation must be considered • the concept of a skilful act means that abortion could be considered a negative act or a 'necessary evil'.	Buddhists believe that life begins at conception because of the continuous cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. The Tibetan Wheel of Life illustrates how one life affects the next, so a person's past karma must move onto its next existence. Buddhists would be concerned that preventing a rebirth would result in negative karma. Many Buddhists believe that rebirth as a human is rare, making it incredibly special. For instance, Tibetan Buddhists use the story of a blind turtle swimming in a vast ocean and only emerging from the water once every hundred years. This analogy suggests that being reborn as a human is as likely as the turtle successfully coming to the surface through a tiny golden ring floating on the water's surface. Buddhists hold the belief that nirvana, the goal of spiritual pursuit, can only be achieved by humans. Theravada Buddhists aspire to become arhats, or 'worthy ones,' enlightened monks.

	Buddhist beliefs and teachings about euthanasia: • death is the point of transition between this rebirth and the next rebirth • as human life is precious, it should carry on for as long as possible • a person's state of mind (karmic state) at the time of death can determine the kind of rebirth that will follow • the First Precept guides against the killing of a living being, so euthanasia is considered unskilful • the principles of ahimsa and metta encourage no harm and loving kindness • even if the intention is merciful, the act of killing is still wrong; Vinaya III. 86 • the principles of karuna and Right Intention, and individual circumstances, allow for euthanasia to be acceptable, as long as the intention to kill is avoided.	As they progress on their spiritual journey, they accumulate karma, which transmigrates from life to life until they attain nirvana. Mahayana Buddhists emphasize that everyone possesses the potential for enlightenment, known as 'buddha-nature.' This enlightenment may take numerous lifetimes, but it can be attained at any moment during a person's life. Furthermore, Buddhists consider human life precious because it offers opportunities for conscious self-improvement and the cultivation of positive karmic status. Ahimsa, the first precept, can be interpreted in various ways. It can be understood as refraining from taking a life. Since Buddhists generally perceive life as existing from conception, this principle could be seen as a teaching against abortion. The first precept (ahimsa) can also be interpreted as refraining from causing harm to any living entity. Some individuals may use this principle as a justification against abortion, contending that the mother may endure physical, emotional, and psychological distress because of the procedure. They could also argue that the embryo or foetus may suffer from an inability to fulfil its karmic destiny. In Theravada countries, the moral stigma associated with abortion intensifies as the foetus grows. The Five Precepts and teachings of the Buddha are not perceived as 'divinely ordained,' so they don't carry the same moral weight as the Ten Commandments might for some Christians. At the end of his life, the Buddha advised his followers that the Dharma and the Sangha would serve as their guiding principles once he was no longer present. Buddhists can seek advice and guidance from the Dharma and the community of monks and lay people when faced with challenging decisions. They are aware of the repercussions of positive and negative karma, but they don't believe in a divine entity punishing them for their actions.

		Each case should be decided based on its merits and whether it constitutes a skilful act (upaya). A skilful act leads to the best outcome, while an unskilful act results in suffering (dukkha). In Buddhism, intention holds equal importance to action. If the intention is to save the mother's life or prevent the child from enduring a life of agonising suffering, some may consider abortion to be acceptable. However, taking a life violates the first precept and carries karmic consequences for the individuals involved in the abortion. Many Buddhist scholars argue against aborting a foetus that may have disabilities. Dr. Shoyo Taniguchi poses a thought-provoking question: "Which is more qualified as a human, a severely handicapped person brimming with loving-kindness (metta) or an Olympic gold medallist consumed by jealousy and greed?" (Biomedical Ethics from a Buddhist Perspective, 1987). In certain instances, Buddhists might acknowledge that abortion becomes necessary when the primary motivation is selfless compassion for others. For instance, Buddhist scholar Peter Harvey contends that abortion to save the mother's life could be a tragic yet essential act. He emphasises that Buddhist texts lack specific guidance on abortion in cases of rape or incest, but some permit it in these situations due to the inherent violence involved in conceiving the new life. Suggested Learning Activities: • Watch the video clip https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVLPc6lWYaI .(Buddhism and Abortion, Adrian Urias) and discuss with a partner what the Buddhist monk says to explain views about abortion. • Read through the quote: "I think abortion should be approved or disapproved according to each circumstance" (Dalai Lama: The New York Times, 1993). Draw a chart with 2 columns, one headed Approved Circumstances, the other Disapproved Circumstances. List situations that fit into each column, highlight those that are Buddhist views. Consider the role that right intention might play.

		• Moving answers - https://www.edugas.co.uk/articles/3-active-learning-activities-to-try-in-the-classroom-this-term/ Questions might include: When do Buddhists believe that life begins? Why might Buddhists not approve of abortion? Why is human life special? What story might be used to show how rare life as a human is? Why is the First Precept relevant to the discussion about abortion? Why is abortion such a complex issue? What circumstances might be considered when accepting abortion? • Structured discussion following ABC (Argument/Back it up/Challenge the viewpoint) - give pupils an exam style statement e.g. “Abortion is always wrong.” In small groups, allocate a role to each pupil - A, B, or C. 1st pupil gives a point of view about the statement (it can be agree or disagree). Another pupil gives a reason to back up that point of view; someone else challenges it and makes a judgement about whether it is a strong argument. Go through the ABC structure at least twice more. If working in pairs, each pupil can put forward an argument and back it up and the other can challenge it. Within Buddhism, death is an integral part of the ceaseless cycle of samsara, encompassing birth, death, and rebirth. Unlike other belief systems, Buddhists do not argue for a permanent, unchanging entity known as a ‘soul’ or ‘self’. Consequently, upon death, it is one’s karmic state that is reborn. Buddhists discuss the dissolution process that happens when someone dies. First, there is the ‘coarse dissolution’ where the bodily elements (earth, water, fire and air) cease functioning, their consciousness collapses, and eventually their breath stops. There’s also the ‘subtle dissolution’ that persists even after physical death until there’s a gradual awakening of consciousness. This portion of the Tibetan teachings delves into the concept of the Bardo, which encompasses the diverse stages that occur between death and rebirth. Tibetan Buddhists believe that this process takes about 49 days. (See Unit 1 - Buddhist beliefs about life, death and rebirth).

		For Buddhists, life is precious not because it's a divine gift but because it offers the chance to strive for and attain enlightenment. Human life is considered particularly rare because it's the only realm where nirvana can be achieved. Shortening life disrupts the process of karma development and disrupts the karmic balance, possibly resulting in a life in a lower realm. Buddhists also believe that the way a life ends significantly influences the beginning of the new life. Consequently, suicide and euthanasia are generally viewed as negative practices. Some would point to the Buddha, who intentionally consumed food he knew would lead to his death. This act may seem contradictory, but many Buddhists argue that the Buddha was already an enlightened being who had transcended karma, thus being freed from the cycle of samsara. The Dalai Lama seems to explain this as "from a Buddhist point of view, if a dying person has any chance of having positive, virtuous thoughts, it is important – and there is a purpose – for them to live even just a few minutes longer". (Euthanasia: Buddhist Principles). Buddhists perceive death as a transition, leading to the birth of an individual in a new life, whose quality will be influenced by their accumulated karma. Buddhist mourning and funeral rituals acknowledge the significance of karma at the time of death and perform merit-making ceremonies to improve the karma of the deceased person (refer to Unit 1 - Buddhist practices). It is crucial that a person has positive karma. Buddhists firmly believe that voluntary euthanasia is wrong because it indicates a person's mental state is in a poor condition, and they have allowed physical suffering to exacerbate mental suffering. To alleviate their mental pain, Buddhists can turn to meditation and pain-killing medication. This approach will positively impact their karmic state. A person's mental state at the moment of their passing is of utmost importance. Their thoughts should be selfless, enlightened, and devoid of anger, hatred, or fear.

		The First Precept, which prohibits harming or killing, is pertinent in the argument against euthanasia. Euthanasia, which involves causing suffering to both the dying individual and their accomplice, is deemed 'unskilful' as it negatively impacts their karma. The Vinaya code explicitly states that monks who encourage or assist in suicide will be expelled from the community. Most Buddhists oppose euthanasia because they place great emphasis on avoiding harm and refraining from ending life. This principle applies to any form of life, so the intentional termination of life appears to contradict the principles of the Dharma. Instead, Buddhists are encouraged to demonstrate ahimsa (non-violence) and metta (loving-kindness). However, some may argue that assisting someone in ending their life could be the most compassionate act. This perspective might be particularly pertinent in cases where medical care is withdrawn from a terminally ill patient. The Vinaya, the code of conduct for Buddhist monks, outlines the rules surrounding the taking of a life. In the modern world, a common argument in favour of euthanasia is the principle of autonomy over one's own body. However, the Vinaya suggests that the Buddha rejected the notion that death was superior to life, even in cases of extreme suffering. While many view the intention to show compassion to a suffering individual as positive, the act of killing (or inciting suicide) is still considered negative. An example from the Vinaya illustrates this point. A monk who was ill was approached by a group of monks who spoke favourably of death. As a result, the sick monk passed away. The commentary on this incident describes the group of monks acting out of compassion, recognising the immense pain the sick monk was experiencing. Their intention was to inquire about his fear of death, as they believed he was a virtuous and good man who would be granted a favourable rebirth. The sick monk, influenced by their conversation, stopped eating and eventually died. Although they did not directly kill him, the group of monks' focus on death constituted a grave offence, leading to their expulsion from the monastic life.

		The concern of many Buddhists centre on 'dysthanasia', (bad death) or the unnecessary prolongation of the dying process; Buddhism imposes no obligation to preserve life at all costs. While the First Precept guides against harming a living being, for some Buddhists it is not explicit in referring to not killing. Consequently, Buddhists don't share a unanimous opinion on euthanasia. However, Buddhists who have a positive motivation (right intention) and the principle of compassion (karuna) can consider euthanasia acceptable in certain circumstances. Monks adhere to the strict guidelines of the Vinaya code, while lay people don't, so they act in ways they perceive as fitting within an ethical code that encompasses karuna and metta. As karma is determined by both intention and action, Buddhists must ensure that their intention in assisting euthanasia is entirely selfless. This could be the case for a bodhisattva who might be willing to endure rebirth in the Hell realm (of the Wheel of Life) to alleviate another's suffering. In such a scenario, this killing could be considered beneficial and fulfilling the bodhisattva's goal of helping all beings end suffering and attain enlightenment. Suggested Learning Activities: • Sorting cards that put forward a number of arguments about euthanasia – they can be specifically Buddhist but could have more general arguments included. In pairs/small groups discuss each argument and decide whether each one is for/against/neutral. Rank them in order of which the pair most/least agree with (e.g.., their top 5). Finally, pick the one that elicits the strongest feeling in them and write an explanation why. • Read through https://www.yesherabgye.com/p/euthanasia-through-the-lens-of-buddhism .(Euthanasia Through The Lens of Buddhism: Yeshe Rabgye) Produce a mind map to show the various viewpoints set out in the article. ?

		• Silent recap – on separate sheets of paper write out terms that focus on euthanasia e.g., samsara, karmic state, transition/Bardo, rebirth, First Precept, Vinaya Code, karuna, metta, right intention https://www.edugas.co.uk/articles/3-active-learning-activities-to-try-in-the-classroom-this-term/ • Look at the quote: "I think it is better to avoid it" (Dalai Lama, Euthanasia: Buddhist principles). Analyse and evaluate the quote - is it better to avoid it? Should people be kept alive regardless of their wishes? What about Buddhist principles such as karuna and metta

3.6a Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – Buddhist perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.6.1a Freedom of religious expression - Buddhist perspectives	Buddhist beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression: • Buddhism is often considered to be a tolerant religion and evangelisation is not one of its main aims • the principles of Right Speech and Right Action guard against using freedom of expression unskilfully and giving offense • the principles of karuna and metta also guard against using freedom of expression, unskilfully positive karma is gained by living by these principles and ensuring that freedom of expression is used sensitively, causing no harm.	From its inception, Buddhism wasn't interested in evangelisation. Buddha simply taught those seeking liberation and adherence to his path. Even today, Buddhist monks only offer teachings upon request, rather than attempting to compel others to follow the dharma. Motivation is crucial for the teachings to be beneficial. Craving or attachment, exemplified by the desire to convert others, is a form of tanha, so Buddhists cannot pursue such a desire. Mahayana Buddhism emphasises using upaya (skilful means) to teach in a manner and at an appropriate time for each individual. Buddhism is sometimes considered a philosophy rather than a religion, as it doesn't rely on belief in a higher being. Instead, it hinges on the hard work and dedication of the practitioner who voluntarily commits to it. Within the Pali Canon, there's a discourse where the Buddha outlines the factors that determine what's worth saying. The three primary factors are: truthfulness, being beneficial, and pleasing others. This demonstrates that while Buddhists value freedom of expression, they uphold Right Speech in their interactions with others to ensure their words are honest, positive, and non-offensive. This aligns with the Fourth Precept (refraining from wrong speech). Right Action involves taking responsibility for one's speech. "*Every time you open your mouth, there should be a very good reason to speak. Say, because it helps the other person … Speak when we feel it's absolutely necessary to speak*." (Thich Nhat Hanh, https://tnhtalks.org/2024/07/20/the-art-of-listening/) Karuna and metta are crucial qualities that Buddhists strive to cultivate. They believe in demonstrating compassion and loving-kindness to all beings. Additionally, they reflect on how they would feel if they were suffering, which serves as a guiding principle to ensure that their words and actions do not exacerbate someone's pain through hurtful or negative language.

		"*I believe that at every level of society, the key to a happier world is the growth of compassion."* (Dalai Lama, 'What's the Purpose of Life?') The Buddha was precise in his description of Right Speech. He defined it as "abstinence from false speech, abstinence from malicious speech, abstinence from harsh speech, and abstinence from idle chatter." Unskilful speech can stem from the Three Poisons (greed, hatred and ignorance) and can create tension and negative thoughts. When Buddhists speak in a skilful manner they speak the truth, promote harmony among people, use a tone of voice that is pleasant, kind and gentle, and speak mindfully so that their speech is useful and purposeful. As with all other aspects of Buddhist life, this can lead to the accumulation of positive karma. Being mindful in speech is just one way a Buddhist can progress on the path to enlightenment. Suggested Learning Activities: • Look at Article 10 of the Declaration of Human Rights: https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/right/freedom-of-expression/#:~:text=Article. Produce an information sheet that covers what is meant by freedom of expression, circumstances where freedom of expression might be limited, an example of freedom of expression in action. • Draw 3 columns. Put a heading at the top of each column – Truthfulness, Being Beneficial, Pleasing Others. Under each heading list examples of each type of speech. • Personal experience: Consider how other people have spoken to you today. How have you spoken to them? Choose examples of unskilful speech and think of the consequences of it. Think of skilful speech and its impact. Set out your thoughts either in a paragraph or in a grid.

		• Silent debate: stimulus quote "Everyone should have freedom of expression" can be written 1 x A3 sheet of paper and placed in the middle of a group of pupils. Each group can have the same stimulus, or alternative statements can be given. Everyone in the group can respond by writing or drawing their thoughts and ideas. Different coloured pens can be used for different pupils so that the teacher can differentiate their thoughts. After a set period of time (5 - 10 minutes), each member moves to a different group and can 'steal' ideas to add to their own sheet. Alternatively, pupils stay in their group and the A3 sheets move to them, thus enabling them to right their own (different) Ideas on another groups' work. After the activity, the pupils can engage in a group, then class, debate. A3 sheets can later be put onto the classroom wall as a 'gallery' that can be referred to when completing a written, exam style question.
3.6.2a The use of personal wealth – Buddhist perspectives	Buddhist beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • the example of the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) who abandoned extreme wealth to find enlightenment • stories about the Buddha's previous lives demonstrate his great acts of generosity • the Four Noble Truths teach that tanha (craving) leads to dukkha • the Buddha taught The Middle Way between wealth and poverty • the principle of Right Livelihood guides against making money from unskilful means or using money in a way that harms oneself or others • the principle of Right Action guides against taking money (or resources) that are not given freely • the principle of dana (generous giving) is important and leads to positive karma • the principle of karuna encourages the use of money to help others, for example, the work of The Karuna Trust	Prince Gautama, the Buddha, was born into a wealthy family, with his father being a local king. During his early life, he had everything he desired, and his father ensured that he never encountered anything that made him realise the reality of suffering caused by poverty. After experiencing the Four Sights – sickness, old age, death, and asceticism – Gautama decided to abandon his life of luxury and become an ascetic, homeless, and limiting his food intake. Although he later relented and ate more, it was the life devoid of craving (tanha) for worldly possessions that ultimately led to his enlightenment. The Jataka Tales, part of the Pali Canon, a Buddhist scripture, recount stories of the Buddha's past lives. These tales play a significant role in imparting Buddhist values. One well-known story involves Prince Vessantara, a remarkably generous man who freely gave away his possessions to assist others. His actions serve as a powerful illustration of the virtue of generosity. In another story from a previous existence, the Buddha was born into a wealthy family.

	• Buddhist monks have no possessions of their own; they rely on dana • wealth itself is not unskilful, but it must be used for the right purposes; Anguttara Nikaya 1.80.	One day, while ascending a mountain path, he encountered a weak and starving tigress who had recently given birth. In a selfless act of compassion, the Buddha offered his own body as sustenance for the tigress and her cubs. This story further emphasises the importance of generosity. *"Two things alone cause people to ignore the suffering of others: attachment to pleasure and the inability to give aid. But if I cannot feel pleasure while another being suffers, and if I have the power to help, how can I ignore them?" (Jataka Tale 1)* Before he attained enlightenment, the Buddha meditated to uncover the root cause of human suffering. Upon enlightenment, he witnessed the true nature of life, including the fact that people suffer due to their cravings (tanha). In Buddhism, wealth itself is not inherently negative. However, the desire for wealth and the inability to use it to benefit others can lead to suffering and accumulate negative karma. Having lived as a wealthy prince and as an ascetic, Buddha realised that neither extreme was ideal on the path to enlightenment. He achieved nirvana by adhering to the Middle Way, avoiding the extremes of wealth and poverty. The Buddha taught that both the desire for wealth and poverty lead to suffering. He asserted that poverty is the root cause of immorality, ill health, and crimes. The Buddha proposed that providing better living conditions is the solution to poverty. He acknowledged that people can enjoy material possessions but emphasised that they should not be excessively desired.

		Right Livelihood advises Buddhists to earn money through positive (skilful means) and avoid occupations or actions that exploit people financially, such as bookmaking or usury. Honesty is essential in money-making, and cheating or stealing from others is considered negative. Many Buddhists avoid playing the lottery because it taps into greed, and gambling is seen as psychologically, socially, and spiritually harmful. When dealing with financial matters, Buddhists should adhere to the principles of Right Action and the second precept. They should not accept money that has not been given to them and should not squander it. The positive aspects of this precept involve using money to benefit others, being generous, and being honest in all dealings. Dana is an important principle that Buddhists aim to cultivate. It is usually translated as 'generous giving' and, of the eight ways of giving the Buddha listed *(Anguttara Nikaya 8.31),* the final one "*to get rid of greed"* is a way to purify the mind and strengthening one's progress on the path to enlightenment as it is the purest motivation for giving. The Buddha said that the results of dana has immeasurable consequences: *"If beings knew, as I know, the results of giving and sharing, they would not eat without having given"* (Itivuttaka 26). He also warns of the consequences of being mean: *"What the miser fears, that keeps him from giving, is the very danger that comes when he doesn't give."* (Samyutta Nikaya 1.32) Karuna (also known as the Karuna Trust) is a small group of Buddhists in the UK who actively fundraise to alleviate the suffering of communities in India. They put Buddhist principles into practice by demonstrating compassion, living ethically, and providing a framework for spiritual practice. Additionally, they strive for their work to be economically and globally sustainable.

		Buddhist monks, known as bhikkhus, renounce material possessions and refrain from handling money to avoid attachment. While this practice is often referred to as a vow of poverty, it does not necessarily lead to destitution. Monks rely on the generosity of laypeople, who provide them with food, shelter, medical care, and other necessities. By focusing on their spiritual pursuits without being burdened by cravings and attachments (tanha), monks can concentrate on their journey towards enlightenment. In return, laypeople view giving dana as their contribution to the community. They provide worldly goods to monks, and monks reciprocate by serving as spiritual role models and teachers of the dharma. Dana must be freely given, and individuals who give with the right intention accumulate merit, leading to the accumulation of positive karma. When dana is given, the layperson expresses gratitude to the bhikkhu for this opportunity to accumulate karma. Wealth, in itself, is neither inherently good nor bad. However, the manner in which it is acquired and utilised holds significant importance. Buddhists emphasise the skilful use of money, believing it should have a positive impact and refrain from causing harm. For Buddhists, the amount of wealth someone possesses is secondary to the wisdom and compassion displayed in their financial management. Suggested Learning Activities: • Watch the video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3ryHlOahR8 (The Hungry Tigress, A Jataka Tale - Dechen Lhamo). Write a summary of the story, explaining its meaning. • Plan an alternative lesson to teach how tanha (craving) leads to dukkha (suffering). What resources would you use? What examples would you refer to? Are there any video clips/songs that might be used to illustrate the topic? • Create 10 true and false statements for this topic.

		• Produce a summary of the topic. Rewrite it using fewer words. Finally, reduce it to 3 bullet points or a single sentence. • Design a revision sheet that deals with Buddhist teachings on personal wealth. Include some key questions (e.g., why should wealth to be used for the right purposes), concepts (e.g., karma, dana) and teachings (e.g., the Middle Way) • Print out a sheet of hexagons for pupils to write in a number of key concepts from across the part of the course or set up one for the class. Cut out and give out for solo/pair/group work. Pupils to group hexagons together according to the connections they can make. They can move the hexagons as many times as they want as they realise the connectedness of aspects of the course.

Hinduism

3.4b Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth - Hindu perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.4.1b Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Hindu perspectives	Learners should understand: Hindu beliefs and teachings about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • the ultimate reality is Brahman • every atman is a part of this divine essence and are manifestations of Brahman and interconnected; Bhagavad Gita 11:7; Chandogya Upanishad 4.10.4–5 • harmful actions towards nature can lead to negative karma • living in harmony with nature is essential to fulfilling one's dharma • the principle of ahimsa (non-violence) extends to all living beings several aspects of nature are often revered as gods or goddesses; this reverence leads to practices that protect and preserve natural resources • Hindu practices of yoga and meditation often emphasize connection with nature, such as Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation). How the aims and work of Hindu Climate Action reflect Hindu beliefs about caring for the natural world.	Learners will need to draw on their prior learning from unit 1, specifically the nature of Brahman, the relationship between Brahman and atman, and Hinduism and morality. Brahman is the ultimate reality and the creator of all. Brahman is without form and beyond what humanity can understand. Every living thing (humans, animals, birds, insects, plants and the natural world) is a part of Brahman and has a part of Brahman within the Atman. This is known as the atman. To assist with these learners can look at the teachings in the Bhagavad Gita 11:7; Chandogya Upanishad 4.10.4–5. The Gita emphasises the whole of the universe is part of Brahman. It is stated in the Chandogya Upanishad the recognition that Brahman is the vital breath without which life is impossible. Part of a Hindu's dharma is to live in harmony with nature. It is made clear that harming nature in any form can lead to negative karma which is answerable for at death. The principle of ahimsa (non-violence) extends to all living things breathing or not. There is a clear link here to actions of gods and goddesses towards nature and care for the natural world. Learners will need to consider how yoga and meditation shows human connection with nature as it enables Hindus to recognise the unity between humans, animals and the world of nature. Through Yoga and meditation Hindus can reach the realisation that all is one and that everything is us. Consideration should be given to the 12 steps of Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation) which became popular in the 20th century but is believed to have its origins in the 17th Century.

		There is differing views on the Surya Namaskar some say that is was part of ritual that was completed with mantras and offerings but others say it was developed to increase blood circulation during asana practice. Whatever the origin it is now seen in every hatha yoga and ashtanga vinyasa yoga. Learners will need to learn about the aims and work of Hindu Climate Action and apply Hindu Hindu Climate Action – Mobilising the Hindu Community to Tackle Climate Change beliefs on caring about the natural world to recognise how the beliefs reflect the work of the organisation. The organisations aims are: • Raise awareness about the ongoing climate emergency. • Highlight the importance of protecting the environment in the Hindu tradition. • Inspire the Hindu community to go green. • Run campaigns which allow the Hindu community to respond to the climate emergency. • Join interfaith initiatives on climate activism. Projects include conversations with climate activates and organisations as well as a range of workshops. They have also worked on a ditch the plastic campaign as the see plastic as something unnatural and not dharmic. Additionally, they are working with NHSF (UK) in challenging others to take action. The idea is that for every person that completes half of the challenges HCA will plant a tree on their behalf. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could explore the different teachings about the treatment of the natural world and create a summary of them with examples from Hinduism. • Learners could create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that are useful for the content in this part of the specification – this could be done as a quiz, matching activity or simply key word cards.

		• Learners could research the aims and work of Hindu Climate Actions and create a fact file on the organisation. They could add a section on how the work of the organisation reflects Hindu beliefs about caring for the natural world.
3.4.2b Animal rights - Hindu perspectives	Learners should understand: Hindu beliefs and teachings about animal rights: • all living beings possess an atman and are part of Brahman; Isha Upanishad v6, and the cycle of samsara; Yajurveda 12.32 • some animals are regarded as sacred, and their well-being is important for maintaining the balance of nature; Bhagavata Purana 7:14.9 • ahimsa teaches that causing harm to living beings should be avoided caring for animals is part of one's dharma • harming animals can lead to negative karmic outcomes in this life or future lives • harming an animal could be harming a being that may have been a human in a previous life • depending on karma, their own atman may return in animal form in their next life • various animals are associated with deities and are considered sacred such as monkeys (Hanuman), elephants (Ganesh) • the cow is particularly revered and protected (Gau Mata).	Learners will need to draw on their prior learning from unit 1, specifically the nature of Brahman, the relationship between Brahman and atman, and Hinduism and morality. Every living thing (humans, animals, birds, insects, plants, and the natural world) is a part of Brahman and has a part of Brahman within them. This is known as the atman. To assist with these learners can look at the teachings in the Isha Upanishad v6 which states that a wise man sees all beings in the self (atman) and the self (atman) in all beings and the Yajurveda 12:32 which focuses on protecting and not destroying living things. There is a need to ensure an understanding that for Hindus some animals are regarded as sacred, such as, cows, elephants, horses, bulls, boars, tigers and lions. It is important for Hindus that they are cared for and that their well-being is maintained to ensure the balance of nature. This message is clearly portrayed in the Bhagavata Purana 7:14.9 which emphasises that there is no difference between human and animal and there is little difference between their children and the innocent animals.

	Hindu beliefs and teachings about the use of animals for human benefit: • many practise vegetarianism, such as ISKCON, thereby adhering to ahimsa, and out of respect for animal life; Manu Smriti 5:48 • the Mahabharata reflects the Hindu view that the cow should be protected and honoured, the practice of factory farming directly contradicts the principle of ahimsa. Hindu beliefs and teachings about the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • diverse views exist within Hinduism • some Hindus may accept the use of animals in research if it is for the greater good and conducted with minimal harm • others may oppose it outright on the grounds of ahimsa and the impact of negative karma • many advocate for alternative methods to animal testing that align with ahimsa. How the aims and work of Jivdaya Charitable Trust reflect Hindu beliefs about animal rights.	The cycle of samsara states that all living things are part of this cycle. Dependant on how a Hindu lives their present life they could be reborn as any type of living thing. Their atman may return in animal form in the next life. Also, harming an animal could be harming an atman that was human in a previous life. Animals are important within Hinduism not only as vehicles for the gods and goddesses but also as sacred beings. An example of this would be the cow. Hindus stress the importance of animal well-being for maintaining the balance of nature. The Bhagavata Purana states that certain animals such as cows should be treated as a Hindu's child or children and should have the same rights and opportunities. This extends to not harming or killing the animals. Learners should return to the teachings on ahimsa and consider how this applies to animals. They should consider what a Hindu's dharma would say about the treatment of animals and the effect of harming animals on their karma. Animals are associated with deities as their vehicles and as animal forms, such as Hanuman the god of the monkeys, and Ganesh the remover of obstacles and the boy with the elephant head, both of which are worshiped and seen as sacred. Due to this, learners need to understand that both the elephant and monkey are considered sacred and are protected within Indian society. ISKCON Home - ISKCON - The Hare Krishna Movement and how this follows the principle of ahimsa to ensure that they are respecting animal life. The Manu Smirti clearly states that killing an animal is wrong thus showing that eating meat is also wrong. Within Hindu society cows revered and protected (Gau Mata). The Mahabharata teaches that the cow should be protected and honoured. There are clear teachings in the Mahabharata about the treatment of cows.

		The Mahabharata speaks about the spiritual significance of the cow and the karmic merit a Hindu can gain by serving them. It is believed that cows are givers of prosperity and freedom and the granters of all wishes. The Mahabharata states that humanity cannot survive without the cow as she is the environment and existential reality. Factory farming goes against the principle of ahimsa. Hindus would see factory farming as cruel and purposely causing pain with in itself is opposite to the principle of ahimsa. Additionally, ISKCON emphasised that all animal husbandry and food should be cruelty free. There are a variety of views within Hinduism about the use of animals in scientific and medical research for some, they would oppose the research due to ahimsa and the impact of negative karma. Others may see it as the lesser of two wrongs and that the research is for the greater good as long it is causing minimal harm. An alternative view may be that they would look at alternative methods of research that align with the principle of ahimsa such as using simple organisms like bacteria or exploring advanced technologies. Jivdaya Charitable Trust is a not-for-profit animal welfare organisation which provides care and medical aids to injured and stray birds and animals. Its name means being compassionate for all living beings. It also runs rehabilitation centres and manages a well-equipped veterinary hospital in Gujarat. They also have mobile clinic vans and 72 members of staff with 9 experienced veterinarians. Their aim is to reach animals in pain and suffering and to bring them back to health with medical care. The organisation started in 2007 and is inspired by the words of Mahatma Gandhi ***The greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated.*** They are working on a range of projects which include: • Saving abandoned and homeless cows in Gujarat • Avian Rehabilitation • Animal care on wheels

		• Multi-speciality care for Pawsomes Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create a mind map on the main Hindu teachings and link them to examples of Hindu perspectives on animal rights. • Learners could hold a class debate making use of Hindu views and beliefs on one side of the argument an alternative religious and non-religious views on the other and consideration of their own views as part of a debate. • Learners could create case studies for each other and rotate to different case studies applying Hindu responses aligned with their beliefs and practices. • Learners could research local or national organisations or individuals that exemplify Hindu perspectives towards animal rights.

3.5b Roles, rights and **responsibilities: human nature and the right to life - Hindu perspectives**		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.5.1b What makes us human - Hindu perspectives	Learners should understand: Hindu beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • due to the cycle of samsara, there is no point at which a foetus or embryo is not living • the core of human identity is the atman**,** the soul or self, which is part of Brahman • the atman's ultimate goal is unity with Brahman (moksha) and end the cycle of samsara • humans possess free will and have the ability to create good or bad karma which affects samsara • the prakriti (nature) of everything possess 3 qualities (the Three Gunas) • only humans can alter the balance of gunas • the senses, which cause instability and desire, have to be controlled; Bhagavad Gita 5:20-21.	Learners will need to draw on their prior learning from unit 1 to support their understanding on Hindu perspectives on what makes us human. Hindus believe that humans are a continuous part of the cycle of samsara within Hinduism this included the foetus and embryo. All things are living things from the beginning, there is no point at which the foetus or embryo is not living. This will influence a Hindu's view on medical ethics and ethical debate. All living things the core of what makes us human it the true self, known as the atman in Hinduism. They must also remember work studied in unit 1 which focused on the relationship between Brahman and atman. It is essential that learners know that the atman is the part of Brahman within every living thing and the ultimate goal of every human is for the atman to unite with Brahman (moksha) and break the cycle of samsara. Hinduism believes that humans have free will and they have the ability to create good and bad karma. They also recognise that there are consequences to their actions this can be seen through the effects of karma. These effects can be seen in the present life, the next life or in future lives. Hindus follow the Three Gunas (qualities) which Brahman has created and controls: • Sattva (purity and knowledge) • Rajas (activity and desire) • Tamas (darkness and destruction) The prakriti (nature) of everything possesses these. The gunas influence all aspects of existence for Hindus this includes human behaviour, nature and spiritual progress. It is only humans that are capable of altering the gunas other living things are unable to do so.

		The Bhagavad Gita 5:20-21 emphasises that it is humans that allow their visions to be clouded by desire and instability. If they are unable to control this then they are caught in the cycle of samsara. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that are useful for the content in this part of the specification – this could be done as a quiz, matching activity or simply key word cards. • Learners could create a diagram on the main Hindu teachings in preparation to link them to the medical ethics issues in 3.5.2b.
3.5.2b Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Hindu perspectives	Learners should understand: Hindu beliefs and teachings about medical ethics - abortion: • Hindus hold different beliefs • Hindus generally believe all living beings possess an atman and are part of Brahman • dharma emphasizes the protection of life; Manu Smriti • dharma is also context-dependent – therefore abortion might be considered permissible in some situations • the principle of ahimsa and the belief that the atman exists from the moment of conception is stated in Hindu scripture; the Garbhopanishad • abortion can be seen as generating negative karma for those involved. Hindu beliefs and teachings about medical ethics - euthanasia: • Hinduism holds different beliefs • Hindus believe all living beings possess an atman and are part of Brahman	• Learners will need to draw on their prior learning from units 1 and 2 to support their understanding on Hindu perspectives on medical ethics. • There will be a variety of views and beliefs held by Hindus about abortion. • A central belief in Hinduism is that all living beings possess an atman and are part of Brahman. They believe that the atman is present form the moment of conception, by carrying out an abortion a Hindu would be preventing the atman to fulfil its life's purpose. • The focus of a Hindu's dharma (duty) is the protection of life. The Manu Smirti as part of its moral code emphasises the importance of protection as an essential duty. • By having an abortion, it could be considered that a Hindu is breaking their dharma to produce children. • Consideration needs to be given as to whether dharma can under certain situations enable abortion to be permissible. As dharma is context dependant there could be some situations where abortion is permissible, such as, concerns over the mother's health or life. • Hindus believe the atman exists from the moment of conception as it stated in the Garbhopanishad and is part of Brahman. The Garbhopanishad focuses on medical matters and states that

	• dharma – there is a conflict between the duty to preserve life and the duty to alleviate suffering • some argue that it is a person's dharma to endure suffering with courage and dignity, as it may lead to spiritual development • ending a life prematurely might be seen as disrupting the cycle of samsara; Manu Smriti • ahimsa – ending a life can be viewed as an act of violence • Hinduism also values karuna (compassion), so passive euthanasia may be acceptable is some situations.	human consciousness goes through a number of stages whilst in the womb. • Abortion can be seen as generating negative karma for all involved. This is because a person requesting or carrying out an abortion could be going against their dharma and the principles of ahimsa. Additionally, they are not considering the atman that is already within the foetus at conception. There will be a variety of Hindu views and beliefs held on euthanasia. Hindus believe the atman exists from the moment of conception and is part of Brahman. Hindu understanding of dharma recognises that there is a conflict between preserving life and the duty to alleviate suffering. For some Hindus part of their dharma is to endure suffering with courage and dignity as it is part of spiritual development. It can be seen as a necessary result of negative karma in previous lives. Euthanasia can be seen as ending a life prematurely which not only brings negative karma for the person assisting the death but also disrupts the cycle of samsara. This means that the person who dies will have to relive the same life as they would not have completed their karmic debts in the present life. This is referred to within the Manu Smirti. Hindus would also consider the concept of ahimsa when considering a Hindu's response to euthanasia. Hindus would have to consider if ahimsa allowed for euthanasia. They would have to weigh up if carrying out euthanasia would create violence thus going against ahimsa. Additionally, consideration needs to be given as to whether not carrying out euthanasia would in itself cause suffering and pain which would in itself go against ahimsa. There may be a situation where Hindus accept passive euthanasia on the grounds of karuna (compassion), such as keeping a person on life support when there is no hope of recovery.

		Suggested learning activities: • Learners can use the teachings listed to identify what each quote is saying about what Hindus believe about abortion and euthanasia. • Learners could create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that are useful for the content in this part of the specification – this could be done as a quiz, matching activity or simply key word cards. • Learners could create a flow chart diagram showing the main beliefs and teachings alongside identifying whether this would support or not abortion or euthanasia. • Learners could create an information leaflet that details Hindu beliefs on abortion and euthanasia. • Learners could develop a diagram considering the strengths and weaknesses of the different Hindu views and beliefs that contribute to the abortion and euthanasia debate. • Create some ethical dilemmas or choices a Hindu may be faced with about abortion or euthanasia and show how they might use sources of authority to decide what action they may take – this could be written as an Agony Aunt style letter with a response given that follows Hindu principles.

3.6b Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth - Hindu perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.6.1b Freedom of religious expression - Hindu perspectives	Learners should understand: Hindu beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression: • The Hindu view is that there are many paths to the same truth; Sarva Dharma and Sama Bhava • Hindu tradition encourages dialogue and debate – there are multiple schools of thought, such as Advaita (non-dualism), Dvaita (dualism) • ahimsa advocates for peaceful coexistence, harm that could be caused by religious intolerance or coercion • various reform movements within Hinduism emphasise freedom to pursue spiritual truths.	Hindus accept that there are more than one paths to reaching the truth. Sarva Dharma and Sama Bhava show that Hinduism teaches that all religions are equal and all destinations on the paths are the same. Both phrases were used by Mahatma Gandhi to try and lessen the divisions between Hindus and Muslims at the time. Secular India aims to follow this practice by accepting all religions within the law of the land. Hinduism has a long tradition of dialogue and debate due to its historical multiple schools of thoughts and traditions. Learners should remember from unit 1, how different traditions within Hinduism perform and follow bhakti. The two schools of thought Advaita and Dvaita co-exist. Advaita emphasises non-dualism with the ancient philosopher Shankara emphasising that Brahman does not have qualities and there are no differences between Brahman and the atman. On the other hand, Dvaita, dualism, through the ideas of Madhvacharya, states that there are distinct differences between Brahman and the atman. There is a clear distinction in their beliefs with Advaita emphasising the unity between both and the final goal of realising an individual's true nature in Brahman while Dvaita emphasised the eternal and separate nature of the self and the importance of worshipping a personal deity. The concept of ahimsa can also be applied here as it emphasises the importance of religious tolerance and cohesion. It is important to consider that following ahimsa shows a desire for peaceful coexistence.

		Reform movements within Hinduism also focus on the need to freely pursue personal spiritual truths. These can be seen in the late 19th century and early 20th century where the charismatic leaders moved away from the age-old traditions and the caste hierarchies and social injustice and promoted rationalism, education and religious tolerance. Suggested learning activities: • Learners can create a summary page of all the beliefs and teachings on freedom of religious expression from a Hindu perspective. • Learners could create a summary infographic of the main beliefs and teachings about freedom of religious expression held by Hindus – use lines to show the links between them. • Learners could complete a research project on how reform movements focus on the need to freely pursue personal spiritual truths.
3.6.2b The use of personal wealth - Hindu perspectives	Learners should understand: • Hindu beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • one of the four main goals of human life is artha – the Bhagavad Gita teaches the importance of vairagya (detachment) from material possessions and wealth. • the true goal of life is spiritual progress – wealth should only be used to support this journey, not hinder it • wealth should not be obtained through unethical practices • dana is a highly valued virtue that earns positive karma.	Learners should understand Hindu attitudes towards personal wealth. Learners should draw on previous learning around wealth and the meaning of life work in unit 1. They should revisit artha (wealth and power) to consider and understand fully how wealth should be gained and used. The Bhagavad Gita states the importance of being detached (vairagya) from material possessions and wealth. Hinduism gives a message around losing focus of the true goal in life that of spiritual progress. If an individual overly focuses on the gaining of wealth, then they lose the true focus of life. Wealth can only be used to support the spiritual journey and not to hinder it. If it hinders then it would be seen as negative karma. How wealth is gained is also of importance to Hindus, they need to ensure it is gained through ethical and honest means. This relates to the idea of each Hindu having specific duties in life.

		For Hindus the sharing of wealth can bring positive karma. This is known as dana and can be seen through their work with helping the less fortunate and giving to charity. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create a resource to identify a glossary of key terms that are useful for the content in this part of the specification – this could be done as a quiz, matching activity or simply key word cards. • Create some financial dilemmas a Hindu may be faced with in their daily life and show how they might use sources of authority to decide what action they may take.

Islam

3.4c Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth - Islam		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.4.1c Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Islamic perspectives	Learners should understand: Islamic beliefs and teachings about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • the world was created by and belongs to God; Qur'an 7:54 • humans are seen as khalifahs (stewards); Quran 35:39 of the earth (fil ardh); Qur'an 6:165 • stewardship reflects a deep interconnectedness with the rest of creation • humans are responsible for maintaining the balance (mizan) in the world; Qur'an 55. 7-9 • tawhid, extends to the oneness of creation • fitrah leads people to seek God and to live in harmony with the environment • on the Day of Judgment (Akhirah), humans will be made accountable for their actions towards the natural world. How the aims and work of Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) reflect Islamic beliefs.	Learners will need to understand key Islamic beliefs and teachings on where the world came from and how this is related to what Muslims believe about how and why they should look after the world. Learners should know that the Islamic creation story comes from the key teachings in the Qur'an where Muslims believe Allah said 'Be' and everything came into existence. Islam teaches the idea of khalifah or stewardship which is a responsibility that was given to the first human and prophet, Adam that is continued in the role of humanity. Muslims believe they have a duty to act as caretakers for the world which means they can use the world but should not exploit the world and should work to sustain it for future generations. Islam teaches that beliefs about stewardship relate to ideas of all aspects of creation, including humanity being connected as it all belongs to Allah. Mizan is an important concept based on Surah Al-Rahman where Allah describes creation in perfect balance and Muslims are expected to maintain this and live in harmony with all parts of creation. Fitrah is a natural instinct all Muslims believe they have to treat the world in the right way as it was created by Allah and Muslims believe that by caring for the world, they can also seek and experience Allah through experiencing his creation. A key Islamic belief is acceptance of Tawhid – the Oneness of Allah. As Allah is accepted as the creator of the universe, Muslims also believe that Tawhid extended to creation and the universe. A key teaching in Islam is that Muslims believe they will be judged by Allah after death, on the Day of Judgement on how they have lived their lives, and this includes how they treated the environment. It could determine whether they achieve Jannah (Paradise) or Jahannam (Hell).

		Learners should be able to give examples of actions that Muslims can perform to reduce their impact on the world and how they can work to improve the damage that has been caused already. Muslims believe they can care for God's creation in a variety of ways including through recycling, replanting trees, being more energy efficient and using renewable sources of energy, reducing pollution as well as many others. The Islamic foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) (https://www.ifees.org.uk/about/about-ifees/) is an organisation that recognises the impact humanity has had on the world and appreciates the way Muslims can work to contribute to reducing this impact. Their aims are: • to increase knowledge and awareness of Islamic teachings around the environment • to change attitudes and behaviour that causes major environmental problems such as climate change, deforestation, desertification, pollution and environmental destruction • to alleviate poverty through projects specifically designed to deal with sustainability issues They hope to maintain the earth as a habitat for future generations and have involvement in projects such as building eco-mosques, educating children and Muslims in how they can work to help the environment and taking action to reduce plastic use.

		Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create a retrieval quiz with questions on the topic of 'Why should Muslims care for the world?' • Learners could produce a poster to encourage people to care for their environment and include different worldview perspectives on the issue • Learners could research the work of IFEES and create a presentation to share on what they do, current projects and reasons why they think it is important to care for the world • Learners could take part in a debate around the question of who is responsible to care for the world and why, where they vote at the end for who they feel gave the strongest arguments
3.4.2c Animal rights – Islamic perspectives	Learners should understand: Islamic beliefs and teachings about animal rights: • the Prophet Muhammad showed kindness to animals • Muhammed taught stating that those who are kind to animals are rewarded by Allah; Bukhari • on the Day of Judgment (Akihrah), humans will be accountable for their actions towards animals. Islamic beliefs and teachings about using animals for human benefit: • God provided livestock for humans to use, including for food; Qur'an 40:79-80 • some Muslims avoid factory farming and killing animals for sport • Muslims are encouraged not to over-work animals • Halal slaughter practices include thanking Allah for the animal's life. Islamic beliefs and teachings about use of animals in scientific and medical research:	Learners will need to understand why animals are an important part of Allah's creation. The main reason given by Muslims for respecting and protecting animal life is because they believe everything in the universe was created by Allah, as explained in the Islamic creation story. Muslims believe that animals exist for the benefit of human beings but that this does not mean they should be exploited or abused. Instead, animals should be treated with kindness and compassion rather than cruelty and caring for animals is seen as an act of worship. This is further reinforced by stories of how Muhammad looked after his own animals; it is believed by Muslims that the prophet took care of his own camels when he was travelling and would make sure that their needs were taken care of before he knelt to pray. Another story includes a story when someone travelling with the prophet took some eggs from a nest which caused the mother bird great distress, and the prophet told the man to return the eggs. Islam also teaches that in the afterlife, Muslims will be judged on the Day of Judgement by Allah on the way they looked after the environment which includes how they have treated animals. Muhammad is said to have told his followers that Allah will reward acts of charity towards animals.

	• some Muslims believe that animal experimentation is permissible when it serves as beneficial to human life and health • it must be conducted with the intention of achieving a greater good • it must inflict as little harm as possible • if alternatives are available, they should be used. • How the aims and work of Salam for Animals reflect Islamic beliefs about animal rights. experimenting on animals is morally wrong if the animal concerned might come to any harm.	Islam is believed to give rules and guidance on how Muslims should treat animals. Muslims accept the teaching of Qur'an 40:79-80 which states they can use animals for food by saying "*It is God who provided for you all manner of livestock…and from some you may derive your food.*" This can also be interpreted as Muslims needing to show respect towards animals in the way they use them which is shown through the application of their halal diet laws. Some Muslims will not have involvement nor eat animals that have been part of the process of factory farming where strict intensive controls have been used rather than allowing animals to roam free or develop naturally. They argue that factory farming is cruel and unnatural so will not want involvement or to benefit from it. Some Muslims, for similar reasons believe that the use of animals in sport where they end up being killed such as in examples such as fox hunting or horse racing or hunting animals for entertainment. Learners should be able to give traditional reasons why Muslims will not accept these uses of animals (e.g. Muslims will not accept horse racing for gambling reasons) but more importantly that they also believe all animals were created by Allah and should be protected rather than used in these ways. Halal slaughter practices teach Muslims to be respectful of animals as they are part of the creation of Allah. Some of the rules include: • The animal should be looked after properly before it is killed – this is to show respect to it as part of Allah's creation. • The halal butcher killing the animal should be a sane Muslim – they should be aware of the requirements and able to carry out the task. • The name of Allah should be spoken before carrying out the slaughter – this reinforces that the animal is a creation of Allah and is being killed with Allah's consent. • An animal should not be killed in sight of another animal – this is so any animals being slaughtered are not distressed.

		• The animal should be killed with a single cut using a sharp knife on the jugular vein – this is to ensure the process is quick. • The animal should be allowed to bleed out after dead – this is because Muslims believe you should not have blood as part of a halal diet. Learners should understand that there is diversity in views on whether Muslims should use animals for scientific and medical research, largely due to the fact the Qur'an does not explicitly give direct rules on this. Most Muslims accept that if the animals don't suffer unnecessary pain or mutilation and there is a good reason behind the experiment, it is acceptable. For example, they will consider the intention of the act of using the animal in the experiment – if it is of benefit to saving human life, it may be considered as more acceptable but if nothing is gained, including knowledge or the ability to cure illness, it would be considered unethical. They would look to arguments that support caring properly for the animals involved, causing as little harm as necessary and only using animals if it will benefit human life and is needed; for example, if using the animal leads to the development of a new treatment for humans or assists in finding a cure for an incurable disease. Learners should be given the opportunity to consider a range of arguments around the use of animals to benefit humans. These may include: • There being better ways to get the same information – for example, testing on humans gives more reliable results or computer assisted programmes being used to generate predicted results. • A greater good is achieved with minimal suffering or death caused to the animals involved. • It will lead to further developments in the world of illness and disease that in the long term cannot be gained any other way and it directly benefits human life.

		Learners can look to examples of organisations such as Salam for Animals (https://www.salamforanimals.com/) , which is an animal rights organisation that wants to empower Muslims to take action to protect animals rather than exploit them. Their aims are: • To educate Muslims about critical animal issues from an Islamic perspective. • To provide Muslims wats to help animals and advocate for them. • To connect Muslims with other animal protection organisations. It offers guidance on how Muslims should treat animals and what is acceptable as uses of animals in line with Islamic law principles. Some of their campaigns include: • Working in countries such as Egypt to raise awareness of the cruelty of actions such as camel rides. • Providing information to Muslims about how Islam says animals should or shouldn't be treated – examples include their use in experiments, their use in various forms of entertainment, the use of animals for clothing and as part of a halal diet. • Volunteer projects working with animals. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create a list of pros and cons of the uses of animals showing what Muslims would say about each use. • Learners could research the work of Salam for Animals and create an information leaflet to inform Muslims of their work. • Learners could produce a vlog or podcast where they have a roleplay with learners taking on different roles to show differing perspectives on the use of animals. • Learners could take part in a human continuum line where they need to show their levels of agreement with given statements around the use of animals.

3.5c Roles, rights and **responsibilities: human nature and the right to life – Islamic perspectives**		
	Content Amplification	**Teacher Guidance**
3.5.1c What makes us human – Islamic perspectives	Learners should understand: Islamic beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • human beings were uniquely created by Allah with the best physical, intellectual, and spiritual capabilities; Qur'an 95:4 • the soul (ruh) is considered the essence of human existence, given by Allah; Qur'an 17:85 • humans possess autonomy – free will • humans have moral responsibility; Qur'an 76:3 • humans are born with a natural disposition towards good • humans can recognise the existence of Allah, which is part of the fitrah; Qur'an 30:30 • humans have intellectual ability (aql) and can recognise Allah in creation.	Learners will need to understand the place of humans in the world according to Islamic beliefs and teachings, including how they were created by Allah. The Islamic creation story tells of how humans were created by Allah to be unique and special; an idea often summarised in the phrase 'sanctity of life'. Adam was the first human created by God and was made from seven different handfuls of coloured soil brought from earth by angels. God then breathed life into Adam showing humans were made as different from all other of Allah's creations. Muslims believe humans were made with a soul (ruh) and this is the essence of human existence. The soul (ruh) is mentioned twenty-one times in the Qur'an and is understood to be a single entity that came from God when he breathed life into humans. Islam teaches that when a child is born, its soul is imprinted with a belief in God, known as fitrah and this describes human nature. The soul is what Muslims believe is internal to a person and the part that goes to the afterlife after death. Allah also gave humans abilities such as freewill and the choice to make their own decisions, although they will be judged on these in the afterlife. Islam teaches that humans have a moral responsibility to behave in a correct way as guided by teachings from Islam. This leads Muslims to believe that all humans which are created by Allah are born knowing the difference between right and wrong and have a natural disposition towards behaving in a good way and trying to avoid evil actions in their lives. Islam also teaches that humans have rational /intellectual capabilities (aql) that allow them to recognise the present of Allah in creation. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could draw the outline of a human and identify all the things that Muslims believe makes them different from other aspects of Allah's creation. • Learners could create a comic strip showing Islamic beliefs

		about humans and their place in the world. • Learners could create a poem that summarises the Islamic view of humans.
3.5.2c Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Islamic perspectives	Learners should understand: Islamic perspectives about when life begins: • some believe that life begins at ensoulment • some believe that when the foetus is physically formed, it then becomes a person • some believe that that it is a person from conception. Islamic beliefs and teachings about medical ethics: abortion: • Muslims hold different views, depending on their interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith • sanctity of life is emphasised and taking a life unjustly is considered a grave sin; Qur'an 5:32 • the intention (niyyah) behind actions are crucial in Islamic ethics • the principle of darar (minimizing harm) is important • many Muslims would argue that here are valid grounds for abortion. Islamic beliefs and teachings about medical ethics: euthanasia: • sanctity of life is emphasised and taking a life unjustly is considered a grave sin; Qur'an 5:32	Learners will need to use their knowledge of Islamic beliefs about human life and apply it to appreciate that human life is special to Muslims. The belief in the sanctity of life (that life is special because it was made by Allah) is crucial to understanding why there is diversity of views in when Muslims believe life begins and how this applies to ethical decision making such as choices made concerning abortion. Some Muslims believe that the sanctity of life means a foetus is the womb is recognised as a person and should be protected as a human life. They may suggest that a person is a 'person' from the moment of conception when the sperm and egg meet. Others, however, point to key moments in the development of a foetus to explain when life begins. Ensoulment is traditionally understood by Muslims to occur at 120 days which is when the soul enters the body so some Muslims may suggest that this is when life begins. Alternatively, another view about the start of life is when a foetus is physically formed, and it can be understood and accepted as a 'person'. The different views on when life begins or ends and crucial teachings on the sanctity of life will influence Muslims' views on ethical issues such as abortion and euthanasia. There is diversity in Muslim views on these issues and when making decisions such as these, Muslims will look to sources of authority such as the Qur'an or teachings from Muhammad (the Hadith) to determine what makes an action right or wrong.

	• most Muslims agree that euthanasia, whether voluntary or involuntary, is not permissible in Islam • the intention (niyyah) behind actions are crucial in Islamic ethics • euthanasia is wrong as it involves intentionally ending a life prematurely; Qur'an 16:61 • suffering is often viewed as a test from Allah, which Muslims are encouraged to endure with patience (sabr) and trust in Allah's wisdom; Qur'an 67.2, Surah Al Baqarah 2.155 • palliative care can relieve suffering without hastening death Some Muslims argue that withholding medical treatment may be acceptable if the treatment is prolonging suffering without a reasonable hope of survival.	Learners should be able to interpret teachings such as Qur'an 5:32 which says: *That is why We ordained for the Children of Israel that whoever takes a life—unless as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land—it will be as if they killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it will be as if they saved all of humanity.*[1] *˹Although˺ Our messengers already came to them with clear proofs, many of them still transgressed afterwards through the land.* This shows that life is special and should not be taken as it is the creation of Allah. Taking life is seen as a grave sin and going against the teachings of Allah. <u>Abortion</u> Prior to learners considering Muslims beliefs and teachings on abortion, learners should have some understanding of differing views on when life begins (both religious and non-religious). They should also have had the opportunity to consider the current legal position on abortion in Wales and other countries in the world. Muslims hold differing views on the issue of abortion: • Some will look to teachings such as the sanctity of life that shows life is special as it was made by Allah, believing that murder is forbidden in the Qur'an as every soul has been created by Allah and he has a plan for each life and taking life away is a grave sin. They will look to the example of Muhammad who had a family and believe that Muslims have a duty to marry and have a family, so abortion is seen to go against this. A reason not accepted for abortion is an economic reason which is expressly forbidden by the Qur'an. • Others will suggest there may be good reasons for an abortion and look to the <u>intention (niyyah)</u> behind consideration of abortion with some believing <u>it may be accepted in certain circumstances such as in cases of rape or if the mother's life would be put at risk by continuing with the pregnancy or</u> if the child is likely to be born with a very poor quality of life. The principle of causing darar (<u>least harm)</u> is important so for those who may accept abortion under some circumstances, they would suggest it should happen early with some not accepting abortion after 120 days when ensoulment is believed to happen.

		Euthanasia Prior to learners considering Muslims' beliefs and teachings on euthanasia, learners should have some understanding of methods of euthanasia (active and passive) and types of euthanasia (voluntary and non-voluntary). They should also have had the opportunity to consider the current legal position in Wales and other countries in the world. Most Muslims would agree that active euthanasia is wrong because: • it is taking life, and they believe all life was created by Allah - there are many teachings that discuss the sanctity of life and reasons why life is special, one being that Allah has a plan for each life. To take life is a grave sin is Islam, Qur'an 5:32. • Euthanasia is intentionally making the decision to take away life which the Qur'an forbids when it says: "If Allah were to punish people ˹immediately˺ for their wrongdoing, He would not have left a single living being on earth. But He delays them for an appointed term. And when their time arrives, they cannot delay it for a moment, nor could they advance it" Qur'an 16:61. The intention (niyyah) behind actions are crucial in Islamic ethics. • Muslims believe that suffering has a purpose only known by Allah – they point to beliefs such as that of Al-Qadr where they believe life is predetermined by Allah. Suffering is a test which Muslims must endure with patience (sabr) and trust in Allah's wisdom; Qur'an 67.2, Surah Al Baqarah 2.155. • Muslims may point to alternatives to euthanasia such as hospices where palliative care can be provided rather than ending life prematurely, accepting that suffering may have a purpose and Allah would not allow a person to bear more suffering than they were able to take.

		There may be some cases where some forms of euthanasia are seen as more acceptable (e.g. passive euthanasia) because: • If there is no chance of improvement when a person is reliant on medical treatment to stay alive, they have little quality of life and they are not 'killing' a person but showing compassion through ending their suffering. • Many countries allow passive euthanasia, and Muslims therefore believe the removal of medical treatment that is not having success may be the kinder option. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create a 'quote map' of the main Islamic teachings around medical ethics in Islam and show how they can be used to support or be against abortion and euthanasia. • Learners could complete a timeline of the development of a foetus to appreciate when they think life begins and once they have explored this question from an Islamic point of view, identify this on the timeline. • Learners could create a continuum line summarising the diversity in Islamic views on the issues of abortion and euthanasia including the arguments they use for why they believe they are right or wrong. Learners could take part in a debate around arguments for or against the issues of abortion and euthanasia, including Islamic views as well as their own views.

3.6c	Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – Islamic perspectives	
	Content Amplification	**Teacher Guidance**

3.6.1c Freedom of religious expression - Islamic perspectives	Learners should understand:
	
	Islamic beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression:
	
	• Islam teaches that religious belief should not be compelled; Qur'an 2:256
	• the Qur'an acknowledges followers of Judaism and Christianity as "People of the Book"
	• Muslims are instructed to respect Jews and Christians and their scriptures; Qur'an 29:46
	• sharia provides guidance on how to treat non-Muslims within an Islamic state, emphasizing justice and protection
	• the degree of religious freedom in Muslim-majority countries varies widely:
	  • some have enshrined religious freedom in their constitutions and legal systems
	  • others impose strict limitations on religious expression, especially when it conflicts with Islamic law
	• publicly reciting the Shahadah is an important practice to demonstrate commitment to Islam.
		Learners will need to understand what freedom of religious expression is and be able to give specific examples surrounding it from Islam such as choosing to be religious or non-religious, recognising the value of other religions, how religious freedom may look different in different countries and ways in which Muslims may choose to show their religious expression.
		There are key teachings around freedom of religion in Islam with the most important being that '*there should be no compulsion in religion*' (Qur'an 2:256). This clearly states that religion should be a choice and forcing others to convert or follow beliefs they do not accept is wrong.
		
		Islam is a religion that has many things in common with the religions of Christianity and Judaism; belief in one God and acceptance of the afterlife are two main shared beliefs. For this reason, many Muslims see alliance between the religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism; shown through actions such as a Muslim man being able to marry a Muslim, Jewish or Christian wife or commonly shared beliefs such as acceptance of many of the same prophets such as Adam or Abraham. Teachings from the Qur'an, such as Qur'an 29:46 says: "Do not argue with the People of the Book unless gracefully, except with those of them who act wrongfully. And say, "We believe in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our God and your God is ˹only˺ One. And to Him we ˹fully˺ submit."" Which also supports this idea with Christians and Jews being referred to as '*People of the book'* because of their shared values through some of the same prophets, beliefs and teachings.

		Religious freedom can be seen to be applied differently in different countries which learners should be aware of. In some Muslim-majority countries, Sharia law is the ruling norm and traditional Islamic beliefs and teachings are strictly imposed; this may include teachings such as it being acceptable to use physical punishment or traditional teachings of homosexuality being wrong and punishable by death being imposed. Other examples could include dress where governments state what can and can't be worn (for example, in some Middle eastern countries, women must wear the burqa in public) or practices such as polygamy where a man having up to four wives being allowed. These Islamic countries may impose limitations to freedom to its citizens so all practices are in line with Islamic law. Other countries are more willing to offer respect to a variety of beliefs and also recognise non-religious worldviews. For example, there has been significant modern change in some countries with some issues such as seen in Saudia Arabia where women have been given more rights such as the right to have a driving license that was previously forbidden. Many countries including Egypt and Pakistan have made recognition of human rights and freedoms part of their constitutions and legal systems, suggesting there is an acceptance of all religious views. Learners, however, need to be aware that this inclusion does not necessarily follow that the freedoms are automatically given to citizens and be able to give examples where they are and are not recognised and implemented. Suggested learning activities: • Learners can look at key teachings from the Qur'an around religious freedom from Islam and summarise what they mean and how they may be used to support the treatment of others. • Learners could complete a research comparison of a Muslim-majority country where freedom is limited, a Muslim-majority country where freedom is respected and the UK/Wales to

		identify the key similarities and differences between them. • Learners could create a leaflet explaining Muslim beliefs on religious freedom and freedom of religious expression.
3.6.2c The use of personal wealth – Islamic perspectives	Learners should understand: Islamic beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • wealth is viewed as something God has trusted humans to use wisely (Amanah) • Muslims are expected to use it in ways that reflect God's will • Muslims must avoid israf – extravagance and waste • zakah – is a mandatory ac–t of charity for those who can afford to give it; Qur'an 73:20 • sadaqah – can take many forms, including money, food, or time; Qur'an 3:92 • khums – is one of the Ten Obligatory Acts of Shi'a Islam; Qur'an 8:41 • Muslims are encouraged to invest their wealth in halal ventures • Islam strictly prohibits the practice of charging interest on loans (riba).	Learners will need to understand key teachings from Islam on the earning and use of wealth which explain the beliefs Muslims hold about this issue. Muslims believe wealth is a gift from Allah and humans should act as caretakers of it. Muslims believe it is not bad to be wealthy, but it is how they use it that they will be judged on in the afterlife. Islam teaches that wealth should be gained honestly so there are some actions Muslims do not agree with; lending money for profit and gambling are two actions that are forbidden. Muslims are also taught that they should spend their money wisely and use as much as possible to help others. Israf – excessive waste or extravagance is not accepted as being in line with Islamic principles. Muslims are given the duty of sharing their money with others and this is seen as essential in many Muslim practices. The third Pillar of Faith is zakah which is where Muslims annually give 2.5% of their earning to help the poor. This is usually given to the Mosque as they have zakah boxes or donated through charities such as Islamic Relief. Contrastingly, many Muslims choose to give saddaqah which is extra money, food or time to help others. This can often take the form of volunteer work or food banks. Alternatively, Shi'a Muslims will give khums which was originally a 'war booty' in the time of Muhammad where battles meant there were gains. Today, this is 20% and is often given in trade or goods. Many Muslims are encouraged to use their money for good and this could involve investing it through business projects. These must be in line with Islamic principles (e.g. not focused on interest, having an Islamic focus for example education, etc) and follow halal rules but in modern life, there are many examples promoted online where money can be used by Muslims in the right way.

		Muslims do not support the idea of making interest from others on wealth because charging interest on loans is forbidden – an idea known as riba. There are Islamic banks who will loan money to Muslims to be able to afford accommodation without charging interest and Muslims are expected to apply the same ruling to any use of their personal wealth. Suggested learning activities: • Learners could create an information leaflet that gives guidance on what Muslims are allowed or not allowed to do with their money. • Learners could create a podcast where a Muslim is interviewed to discuss how they think money should be used. • Learners could research an example of an Islamic charity and see how they use zakah, khums and sadaqah to help others.

Judaism

3.4d Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the Earth - Jewish perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.4.1d Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Jewish perspectives	Learners should understand: Jewish beliefs, teachings and practices about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • humanity was given dominion over the earth; Genesis 1:28 • humans are Shomrei Adamah (guardians/stewards of the earth); Genesis 2:15 • the concept of Tikkun Olam includes the idea of social action including environmental responsibility • bal tashchit (do not destroy or waste) promotes sustainability and respect for the natural world: Deuteronomy 20:19-20 • Tu B'Shevat (New Year of the Trees) is a Jewish holiday that celebrates the renewal of nature • some modern interpretations of kashrut include eco-kashrut – environmental and ethical concerns about dietary practices. How the aims and work of EcoJudaism reflect Jewish beliefs about stewardship.	Learners will need to know about the different beliefs, teachings and practices about humanity's relationship with the natural world. The Book of Genesis reminds Jews how God gave them dominion to rule over the world. This includes being stewards (Shomrei Adamah) over the earth but protecting it and being responsible for its renewal. Jews have a duty to live sustainably. This is referred to as Tikkun Olam or repairing the world in Judaism. This could involve living a sustainable life, including recycling, reducing their carbon footprint, picking up litter. For example, the teaching of bal tashchit promotes sustainability and respect for the natural world. Learners will need to know how Jews put their teachings into practice. Tu B'Shevat is a Jewish holiday that celebrates the renewal of nature. It is an opportunity to plant new trees and is a reminder of the Jewish teaching of 'Tikkun Olam', to repair the world. Tu B'Shevat provides Jews with an opportunity to live an environmentally responsible life. Learners will need to know how there are environmental and ethical concerns regarding dietary practices within Judaism. These concerns encourage people to be aware of the sources of food and other products to ensure that they act in a respectful manner and preserve the environment. For example, eco-kashrut questions whether it is ethical for Jews to eat animals that have been kept in small cages in factory farms. Eco-kashrut, also called eco-kosher, encourages attention to the sources of food and other products, with a desire to act in ways that are respectful and that may contribute to preservation of the environment.

			EcoJudaism is the UK Jewish Community's response to the Climate and Biodiversity crisis. EcoJudaism promotes the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment. Their vision is to create a sustainable world where environmental responsibility is part of Judaism. They aim to protect God's world and to educate about the climate and biodiversity crisis. https://ecojudaism.org.uk/ Suggested learning activities: • Research the aims and work of EcoJudaism. Present information through a series of social media posts. • Create an information leaflet outlining key Jewish beliefs, teachings and practices about humanity's relationship with the natural world. • Create a summary infographic about Tu B'Shevat.
3.4.2d	Animal rights - Jewish perspectives	Learners should understand: Jewish beliefs, teachings and practices about animal rights: • the principle of Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim (the prevention of animal suffering) Exodus 23:12; Deuteronomy 25:4 Jewish beliefs, teachings and practices about using animals for human benefit: • humane use of certain animals for food and work is permitted; Leviticus 12; Deuteronomy 14 • animals used for kosher food must be slaughtered using the shechita method to minimise suffering • The Torah prohibits certain practices; Exodus 23:19, Deuteronomy 22:6-7 • Some Jews (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein) object to practices such as overfeeding animals to produce delicacies • only animals such as an ox or a donkey can be used for ploughing or carrying heavy loads	Learners will need to know that Jews believe animals are part of God's creation and should therefore be treated with respect. Judaism teaches that humans have priority over animals, as outlined in Genesis when God gave humans dominion or control over animals. However, Jews are allowed to kill or harm animals if it is essential for human needs, such as food and clothing and even writing the Torah on to parchment from animal skin. The Torah also teaches about using animals as offerings. For example, offering a one-year-old lamb for a burnt offering after childbirth (Leviticus 12) and only eating animals that have cloven hooves and chew the cud, or fish that have fins and scales (Deuteronomy 14). The Torah prohibits certain practices about animals. Learners should know that the Exodus 23:19 teaches Jews how they should not cook a young goat in its mother's milk. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein objected to the overfeeding of animals to produce delicacies. He believed it was wrong to not feed calves appropriately, even if someone will make a profit from such practices. Judaism does not permit an ox and a donkey to plough or carry heavy loads together. This is because they can cause pain and injury to each animal as they work at different paces – Deuteronomy 22:10.

	• animals cannot be beaten or forced to work excessively or unnaturally; Proverbs 12:10 • the laws of Shabbat also provide a day of rest for working animals; Exodus. 20:10. Jewish beliefs, teachings and practices about the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • Jewish teaching allows animal experiments when there is a clear benefit to human life and health • the concept of Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim must be considered • the concept of Bal Tashchit (do not destroy or waste items) must be considered • each case may be subject to individual interpretation of Jewish religious law • some Jews encourage alternative research methods that do not involve animals. How the aims and work of the Jewish Initiative for Animals reflect Jewish beliefs about animal rights.	Judaism teaches that animals are part of God's creation and should therefore be treated with compassion. Proverbs 12:10 explains how the righteous person knows the needs of their beast. This means animals cannot be beaten or forced to work excessively or unnaturally. The Torah gives many instructions on animal welfare. For example, a person must feed their animals before themselves, animals should rest on the Sabbath (Exodus 20:10), only an ox or donkey can plough the fields, and an animal who is suffering should be put out of pain. Whilst Jews are allowed to kill animals, learners will need to know that Jews believe humans should prevent animal suffering. This is known as the principle of Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim – the prevention of any unnecessary pain or suffering to animals. For example, Jews believe that animals must be slaughtered in a certain way. The method of slaughtering an animal is known as shechita. The animal must be killed by a single stroke across the throat with a razor-sharp knife, called a chalef. The slaughter is performed by a specially trained Jew called a shochet. Within the UK, a shochet would need both a religious and civil licence to perform their duties. The method of slaughtering animals is often criticised by animal rights activists who believe shechita is cruel. Learners will need to know that Judaism allows animals to be used in scientific and medical research. However, experimentation on animals must benefit human beings, each case is subjected to individual interpretation of Jewish religious law and the animal should not experience any unnecessary pain. Jews will use the principle of Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim and Bal Tashchit (do not destroy) when considering scientific and medical research. This may impact Jews to encourage alternative research methods that do not involve animals. The work of the Jewish Initiative for Animals reflects Jewish beliefs about animal rights. Their aim is to support innovative programs and

		turn the Jewish value of compassion for animals into action. They do this through education and expert consultations. They provide educational resources for synagogues, schools and youth groups that encourage Jews to consider how they treat animals. They provide expert consultations to Jewish institutions to assist them in reducing meat consumption and provide sustainable alternatives to factory farmed animal products. One example that the Jewish Initiative for Animal campaigns for is 'End Kosher Humanewashing'. This campaign works to end animals being raised on unsustainable and inhumane factory farms. https://www.jifanimals.org/ Suggested learning activities: • Think of a moral dilemma relating to animal rights (for example, the use of animals for medical testing). Write an agony aunt style letter outlining how Jews would use their beliefs to respond to the dilemma. • Research the aims of the Jewish Initiative for Animals and record how they put their aims into action.

3.5d Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life - Jewish perspectives			
	Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.5.1d	What makes us human - Jewish perspectives	Learners should understand: Jewish beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • created in God's image; Genesis 1:26-27 • possess a soul or a divine spark, a spiritual dimension; Ecclesiastes 12:7 • born with both a good, altruistic impulse (yetzer ha tov) and an evil or selfish impulse (yetzer hara) • possess autonomy – free will which comes with moral responsibility; Genesis 3.	Learners should know that on the sixth day of creation, humans were created in God's image and are in possession of a soul (nefesh). Genesis describes how God breathed into man's nostrils, the breath of life. This divine spark of the human soul makes humans different from all creations. The soul allows a person to possess rationality and free will. Jews believe that humans were born to have both good inclinations (yetzer ha tov) and evil inclinations (yetzer hara) and the ability to use their free will to make these decisions. Jews believe the soul is eternal and will be reunited with the body. The account of creation can be found in the Book of Genesis. God created humans to reproduce the earth and to have dominion over it. This means humans have a responsibility to look after the earth. Suggested learning activities: • Use the teachings listed to identify what each quote is saying about what Jews believe makes us human • Design an advert outlining the qualities of what makes us human from a Jewish perspective.
3.5.2d	Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Jewish perspectives	Learners should understand: Jewish perspectives on when life begins: • Jewish thought recognizes the foetus as having potential life • a foetus is not considered a full person (nefesh) until birth according to the Talmud, it is considered part of the mother's body until then. Jewish beliefs and teachings about abortion: • In Orthodox Judaism, abortion is generally permitted if the pregnancy endangers the life or health of the mother; Talmud - Ohalot 7:6-8	Learners need to know that Jews believe that saving a human life is the most important mitzvot in Judaism. Saving a life in Judaism is known as pikuach nefesh and it is so important that a doctor can break the Sabbath to save a human life. Jews believe that life is holy and sacred and belongs to God and as a result, Jews believe that only God can give and take life away. This impacts Jewish views on abortion and euthanasia. Learners will need to know that Judaism does not recognise a foetus as a person (nefesh) until it is born. Before birth, it is considered to be a part of the woman's body and the first forty days after conception, it is considered to be 'mere water'. After forty days, the foetus is part of the woman's body although it does not become

	• pikuach nefesh (saving a life) must be considered • abortion may be permitted in certain situations but is subject to rabbinic guidance and is evaluated on a case-by-case basis • abortion is both a medical and spiritual moral decision • Reform Judaism places a strong emphasis on the woman's right to choose. Jewish beliefs and teachings about euthanasia: • life is considered sacred; and is of utmost value; Genesis 1:26-27 • the principle of pikuach nefesh applies • Jewish Law prohibits active euthanasia because only God has the authority to end a human life; Ecclesiastes 3:2 • some Jews might support passive euthanasia if a person is suffering, and death is imminent • many Jews encourage the use of pain relief and palliative care, even if such treatments might hasten death • Reform Judaism places importance on the dignity and free will of the individual to decide.	human until it takes its first breath and the soul enters the body. Learners will need to know that Judaism does not forbid or allow abortion on demand. Abortion is allowed in certain situations and each case is considered, based on rabbinical guidance. For Jews, abortion is both a medical and a moral decision. For example, Orthodox Jews will allow abortion if the pregnancy endangers the life or health of the pregnant woman is at risk. Reform Jews believe it is the woman's right to choose an abortion and will allow abortion if the pregnancy was a result of rape or incest or if the foetus has developmental defects. Learners will need to know that there are different beliefs and teachings about euthanasia in Judaism. Jews believe that life is considered holy and sacred and a gift from God – Genesis 1:26-27, Ecclesiastes 3:2. A terminally ill person, in Judaism, who is expected to die within 72 hours, is known as goses. This person is still a human and as a result, killing that person is considered murder. Jewish law teaches that only God can end a life, and it is wrong to kill something made in God's image. However, there are different beliefs within Judaism. Some Jews will allow passive euthanasia (withholding or withdrawing treatment to keep someone alive) as there is no direct act of killing someone and death is imminent. Reform Jews accept some forms of euthanasia, such as withholding treatment for people who are seriously ill and dying and allowing a person to use their free will so they can die with dignity. Many Jews accept pain relief medicine and palliative care even though it may hasten death. It is allowed as long as the dose is not certain to kill, but to relieve pain. Suggested learning activities: • Write an agony aunt style letter based on the issue of abortion. Outline Jewish beliefs and teachings within the letter. • Prepare a campaign for and against euthanasia. Outline Jewish beliefs and teachings within the campaign. • Research Jewish beliefs about the sanctity of life. Present your research in an infographic.

3.6d Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – Jewish perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.6.1d Freedom of religious expression - Jewish perspectives	Learners should understand: Jewish beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression: • humans are created in the image of God, with inherent dignity and worth • humans are free to express their religious beliefs and personal identity • there is an emphasis on justice, and all have the right to live according to their beliefs without fear of persecution or discrimination; Deuteronomy 16:20 • Jews have often been persecuted for their religious beliefs, leading to support for religious liberty, both for themselves and for others • Jews are obliged to live according to Jewish Law • the Talmud teaches acceptance of diversity of religious expression • the Talmud teaches the belief that morality and righteousness are not confined to the Jewish people alone • the principle of dina de-malkhuta dina ("the law of the land is the law") must be applied • if the laws of a country violate Jewish Law, they may not apply to Jews.	Humans are created in the image of God and have value – Genesis 1:27. This means humans are free to choose whether they are religious or not – Genesis 2:16-17. For example, Jews may wish to attend a place of worship on the Sabbath, observe festivals such as Pesach and Rosh Hashanah, wear certain dress such as a kippah or observe food laws. Everyone has the right to live in harmony with others and practice their faith without being targeted for it. Jews should follow justice so they can live a good life, in the land God has given them – Deuteronomy 16:20. Learners may consider examples of Jewish persecution, such as the Holocaust and more recent persecutions such as antisemitic attacks nationally and internationally. Judaism accepts people of all nations and therefore they should also treat others with respect. The Talmud accepts the differences in all religions and Judaism has an inclusive view of other faiths. For example, the shared understanding of the unity of humankind before God make lead to co-operation between different faiths. The Talmud teaches that the righteous have a share in the world to come. Jews are taught to respect all religions and teach that Judaism is not the only path to heaven. The teachings of the Talmud are underpinned by the teaching ‘God created mankind in his own image.’ Genesis 1:27. Jews believe that they have a duty to make the most of the gift of human life. The Talmud states that "Anyone who destroys a human life is considered as if he had destroyed an entire world, and anyone who preserves a human life is considered to have preserved an entire world”. (Sanhedrin 37a). However, the belief in morality and righteousness is for all humanity and not just for Jewish people. Learners will need to know about the challenges Jews may experience as a result of living their life according to Jewish law.

		The principle of dina de-malkhuta dina (law of the land is the law) means that the law of the country is binding and in certain cases, preferred. For example, issues relating to dress customs, divorce and Shabbat may be observed differently in Wales and the UK compared to Israel. In the UK, Jewish couples who wish to divorce will be required to obtain a civil divorce, in addition to a get (divorce document). Suggested learning activities: • Research recent examples of antisemitism. Write a newspaper article explaining the example you have researched. • Research how Jews observe Shabbat in Israel. Produce a blog or another digital story outlining the observances.
3.6.2d The use of personal wealth - Jewish perspectives	Learners should understand: Jewish beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • the Torah teaches that God gives the power to acquire wealth; Deuteronomy 8:18 • Jews have a responsibility to use their wealth not just for personal gain but also for the greater good - Tikkun Olam • Judaism warns against the dangers of greed and excessive attachment to wealth • The pursuit of wealth can lead to unethical behaviour and neglect of spiritual and communal responsibilities; Proverbs 28:20-22 • Tzedakah is often translated as charity but more accurately translated as "justice" or "fairness" • charity giving is an act of justice not simply one of generosity • Jews are required to give a portion of their income, usually 10% as a ma'aser (tithe) to those in need • traditional Jewish homes often have a pushke box to collect money for charity.	Learners need to know that what Jews do with their money is important. Judaism warns against the dangers of greed and excessive attachment to wealth. Money should be gained through honest work and not through unethical behaviour such as gambling and fraud. Jews believe that God gives them the power to acquire wealth, and they should use their wealth for the greater good, through Tikkun Olam – '*repair the world*'. For example, in addition to living a sustainable life, Jews can heal the world through contributing to social justice and volunteering for charities. Jews believe that everyone has a responsibility to help those who are suffering from poverty. Tzedakah (justice or fairness) involves giving to charity. For Jews, the greatest level of charity is helping someone. The Talmud teaches the importance of not being greedy but having sufficient wealth to survive in comfort. Moses Maimonides set out the eight levels of giving to charity. These include: 7 - Giving unwillingly. 6 - Giving willingly but inadequately. 5 - Giving adequately after being asked. 4 - Giving before being asked. 3 - Giving to an unknown recipient. 2 - Giving anonymously to a known recipient.

		1 – Giving anonymously to an unknown recipient. Jews believe that wealth should be used for the benefit of the community, therefore they will give 10% of their annual income as a ma'aser (tithe) to those in need. Some Jewish homes have a pushke box, in their home, to collect money for charity. Suggested learning activities: • Research Moses Maimonides. Create a fact file about who he was and his eight levels of charity. • Research Jewish attitudes towards wealth. Create an information leaflet outlining their key beliefs and teachings.

Sikhism

3.4e Roles, rights and responsibilities: Stewardship of the earth – Sikh perspectives		
	Content Amplification	**Teacher Guidance**
3.4.1e Humanity's relationship with the natural world - Sikh perspectives	Learners should understand: Sikh beliefs and teachings about Humanity's relationship with the natural world: • all forms of life are interconnected • the entire universe is a manifestation of Waheguru and deserves respect; Guru Granth Sahib 8; 723 • the Guru Granth Sahib contains numerous hymns that celebrate nature as expressions of Waheguru's greatness • the concept of Sarbat da Bhala (the well-being of all) includes the well-being of the planet and all its inhabitants • harming nature is seen as harming a part of God's creation • the concept of santok (contentment) in Sikhism applies to how one interacts with the natural world • Sikhs are encouraged to live simply, avoiding excessive consumption and wastefulness. How the aims and work of Eco Sikh UK reflect Sikh beliefs about caring for the natural world.	Learners should know that Sikhism teaches that all forms of life are interconnected, and that humanity has a spiritual and moral responsibility to respect the natural world. Waheguru, the divine creator, is believed to manifest in all of creation, including nature. According to the Guru Granth Sahib (8:723), the entire universe is an expression of Waheguru's greatness, and thus, all living beings and the environment deserve respect and care. Sikhs are encouraged to see the divine presence in nature, with numerous hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib celebrating nature's beauty and its role in revealing Waheguru's magnificence. One important teaching is Sarbat da Bhala, meaning "*the well-being of all*." This extends to the well-being of the planet and all its inhabitants. Harming nature is therefore viewed as harming a part of God's creation. This aligns with Sikhism's emphasis on compassion and respect for all life, encouraging an ethical relationship with the environment. Sikhism also promotes santok (contentment), which encourages Sikhs to live humbly, accepting what they have and minimising desires. This concept applies to how one interacts with the natural world—by not exploiting it for selfish gain but instead appreciating its gifts and maintaining a balanced, sustainable relationship. Sikhs are encouraged to avoid excessive consumption and wastefulness, reflecting a lifestyle that values simplicity over materialism. Suggested learning activities: • Nature Walks/Exploration: Organise a nature walk to encourage learners to reflect on how the natural world expresses Waheguru's greatness.

		• Hymn Study: Analyse Sikh hymns that celebrate nature, such as those from Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan, focusing on how nature reflects the divine. • Debate/Discussion: Lead a debate on how Sikhs can contribute to environmental protection, using the principles of Sarbat da Bhala. • Sustainability Project: Have learners design a “Sikh Eco-Action Plan” incorporating Sikh teachings on sustainability and simplicity. Resources: • Guru Granth Sahib translations (online resources) • Search for SikhNet: Environmentalism and Sikhism • Search for BBC Bitesize: Sikhism and Ethical Living. Learners should know that Eco Sikh UK aligns closely with Sikh teachings on environmental care, emphasising the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of respecting nature as part of Waheguru’s creation. The organisation works to raise awareness about climate change, pollution, and environmental justice, reflecting the Sikh principle of Sarbat da Bhala—the well-being of all, including the planet and all living beings. They promote sustainability through initiatives like tree planting, reducing waste, and encouraging energy conservation, which directly reflect Sikh values of simplicity, contentment (santok), and seva (selfless service). Suggested learning activities: • Explore Projects: Research Eco Sikh UK’s initiatives, such as tree planting, and link them to Sikh values of seva and respect for nature. • Group Discussion: Have learners discuss how Sikh beliefs can inspire environmental activism and how young people can contribute.

		• Creative Activity: Create an action plan for a class eco-project inspired by Eco Sikh UK's work. • Resources: Eco Sikh UK
3.4.2e Animal rights - Sikh perspectives	Learners should understand: Sikh beliefs and teachings about animal rights: • Waheguru (God) resides in all forms of life, not just humans; Guru Granth Sahib 663 • Sikh Gurus set examples of compassion towards animals. Guru Har Rai, the seventh Sikh Guru, was known for his kindness to animals • the practice the virtue of daya (compassion) applies to animals as well as humans • harming animals disrupts the balance of nature and is inconsistent with the principle of Sarbat da Bhala • the concept of reincarnation means people live many lives on earth, some of these in the form of animals • harming or killing animals could result in bad karma and lead humans further away from mukti. Sikh beliefs and teachings about the use of animals: • Sikhism allows for personal choice in dietary practices • using animals for food is not forbidden • the jhatka method of slaughter means that the animal must be killed as quickly as possible and experiences as little suffering as possible • many Sikhs, especially those who follow the Khalsa code of conduct, are vegetarian; Guru Granth Sahib 467 • some consider that the concept of ahimsa applies just as much to animals • langar kitchens in gurdwaras offer vegetarian food only.	Learners should know that in Sikhism, Waheguru (God) is believed to reside in all forms of life, not just humans. The Guru Granth Sahib (663) teaches that all living beings, including animals, are part of God's creation and deserve respect and compassion. Sikhs believe that every form of life is interconnected and reflects the divine presence of Waheguru. The Sikh Gurus set examples of compassion toward animals. For instance, Guru Har Rai, the seventh Sikh Guru, was well-known for his care for animals. He kept an extensive garden and ensured the well-being of both animals and plants, emphasising the importance of kindness in all aspects of life. His example highlights the Sikh teaching of daya (compassion), which extends to all living beings, not just humans. Harming animals disrupts the balance of nature and contradicts the Sikh principle of Sarbat da Bhala, the well-being of all. This teaching implies that just as humans should strive for peace and well-being, so too should they protect animals and the environment. Additionally, Sikhs believe in reincarnation, meaning that souls may be reborn in different forms, including as animals. This belief further strengthens the case for treating animals with kindness, as harming or killing them could potentially lead to bad karma, moving individuals further from mukti (liberation). Suggested learning activities: • Case Study: Examine the life of Guru Har Rai and his acts of kindness towards animals, discussing how his example can be applied today. • Karma and Reincarnation: Discuss how the Sikh belief in reincarnation affects the way Sikhs view their relationship with animals, emphasising respect and compassion.

	Sikh beliefs, teachings and practices about the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • there is no explicit prohibition against using animals in scientific and medical research • many Sikhs see human life as ultimately of more value than animal life • any research using animals would need to be balanced against the Sikh value of ahimsa • any suffering must be justified by significant benefits to human life and health • Sikhs might support the use of alternative research methods. How the aims and work of India Animal Fund reflect Sikh beliefs about animal rights.	• Group Activity: Have learners research and present examples of animal protection efforts within Sikh communities, linking them to Sikh teachings on compassion. Learners should know Sikhism emphasises personal choice when it comes to dietary practices, and there is no universal requirement for Sikhs to be vegetarian. Using animals for food is not forbidden, but Sikhs are encouraged to consider compassion and respect for all living beings. The jhatka method of slaughter is preferred, where the animal is killed as quickly as possible, minimising suffering. This method reflects the Sikh principle of daya (compassion) and seeks to ensure the animal does not endure unnecessary pain. Many Sikhs, especially those who follow the Khalsa code of conduct, choose to be vegetarian, following the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib (467) which emphasises the importance of non-violence and compassion. While there is no strict prohibition against consuming meat, the Khalsa code encourages a lifestyle that minimises harm to others, including animals. The concept of ahimsa (non-violence) in Sikhism is often extended to animals, and many Sikhs believe in treating animals with the same respect and care as humans. This reflects the belief that all life is interconnected, and harming one form of life disrupts the natural balance. Additionally, langar (the communal kitchen) in gurdwaras traditionally serves only vegetarian food. This practice aligns with the principle of non-violence and inclusivity, ensuring that all people, regardless of dietary restrictions, can partake in the meal. Suggested learning activities: • Discussion: Have learners debate the ethical implications of eating meat, exploring the balance between personal choice and compassion.

		• Compare Practices: Compare Sikh dietary practices with those in other religions, such as Hinduism or Buddhism, focusing on their shared values of non-violence and respect for animals. • Langar Experience: If possible, arrange a visit to a gurdwara for learners to experience langar and understand its significance in Sikhism. Learners should know Sikhism does not provide an explicit prohibition against using animals in scientific and medical research but using animals in research would need to be balanced against the Sikh value of ahimsa (non-violence). However, the use of animals must be considered carefully, balancing the Sikh values of compassion (daya) and non-violence (ahimsa) with the potential benefits of the research. Many Sikhs view human life as ultimately of greater value than animal life, given the centrality of humans in the divine plan. This does not mean that animals are viewed as unimportant, but rather that the ethical use of animals in research must be carefully weighed. Any research involving animals would need to ensure that suffering is minimised, and it should be justified by significant benefits to human health or scientific knowledge. Sikh teachings encourage minimising harm to all living beings, so if the use of animals results in unnecessary suffering or does not lead to meaningful human advancement, it would likely be seen as unethical. In line with this, Sikhs might support the use of alternative research methods, such as computer simulations, cell cultures, or non-animal testing methods, if these can provide similar or better results without causing harm to animals. Research practices that align with the Sikh principle of ahimsa—doing no harm—would be viewed as preferable.

		Suggested learning activities: • Debate: Organise a class debate on the ethical considerations of using animals in medical research, encouraging learners to balance compassion and human advancement. • Research Comparison: Have learners explore alternatives to animal testing and how these methods might align with Sikh values. • Case Studies: Present real-world examples of animal use in medical research and discuss how Sikh teachings might influence perspectives on these practices. Learners should know the India Animal Fund (IAF) works to improve the welfare of animals in India, reflecting key Sikh beliefs about animal rights, compassion, and the interconnectedness of all life. The IAF's mission includes rescuing animals in distress, promoting humane treatment, and advocating for the protection of animals, aligning with Sikh teachings of daya (compassion) and ahimsa (non-violence). Sikhism emphasises respect for all living beings, and the IAF's efforts to reduce animal suffering resonate with the Sikh principle that harming animals is harmful to God's creation. Sikh beliefs in Sarbat da Bhala (the well-being of all) extend to animals, encouraging Sikhs to work towards the well-being of every creature. The IAF's campaigns to reduce cruelty and raise awareness about the importance of animal rights reflect this Sikh ideal of seeking the welfare of all life forms. The interconnectedness of all living beings in Sikhism teaches that the suffering of one is linked to the suffering of others. By addressing issues like animal cruelty and the exploitation of animals, the IAF aligns with the Sikh teaching that animals should be treated with respect and care. Moreover, the belief in reincarnation suggests that humans may be reborn as animals, further emphasising the need for compassionate treatment of animals.

		Suggested learning activities: • Case Studies: Examine IAF's work, focusing on how its campaigns reflect Sikh teachings of compassion and non-violence. • Research Project: Have learners explore how Sikh teachings on animal rights compare with Christian views on animal welfare. • Group Discussion: Discuss how learners can incorporate Sikh values of compassion and care for animals into their daily lives. Resources: India Animal Fund

3.5e Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life - Sikh (Sikhi) perspectives		
	Content Amplification	**Teacher Guidance**
3.5.1e What makes us human - Sikh perspectives	Learners should understand: Sikh beliefs and teachings about what makes us human: • every human contains a divine spark known as atma (soul) • the atma is part of the universal soul or Waheguru; Guru Granth Sahib 96 • humans were all created by Waheguru and are worthy of respect; Guru Granth Sahib 272; 349 • humans are the highest form of living creatures and are unique because they can make moral judgements • humans have a spiritual essence • human actions have consequences – positive or negative karma • humans are encouraged to align their will with hukam (the divine will) • karma affects the attainment of mukti • Sikhs should aim for their lives to be gurmukh rather than manmukh • Sikhs should aim to transcend haumai (the ego - self-centredness).	Learners should know that in Sikhism, the human soul (atma) is considered a divine spark, a part of the universal soul, Waheguru. The Guru Granth Sahib (96) teaches that each individual contains an atma, which connects humans to the divine and to all living beings. Sikhs believe that humans, as creations of Waheguru, are inherently worthy of respect, as stated in Guru Granth Sahib (272; 349). This teaching underscores the importance of human dignity and the interconnectedness of all life. Humans are considered the highest form of living creatures in Sikhism due to their ability to make moral judgments. Unlike other creatures, humans have the unique capacity for reflection, choice, and the ability to distinguish right from wrong. Their spiritual essence enables humans to live according to divine principles and pursue a life of righteousness and devotion to Waheguru. Humans are also accountable for their actions, which are believed to lead to karma. Positive actions lead to good karma, while negative actions result in bad karma, influencing an individual's journey towards mukti (liberation). Karma, therefore, plays a key role in shaping the future of the soul, influencing whether an individual reaches union with Waheguru. Sikhs are encouraged to align their will with hukam, the divine order. By doing so, they can live in harmony with the universe and attain spiritual fulfilment. The ideal is to live as gurmukh (one who is aligned with the Guru's teachings) rather than manmukh (one who is self-centered and driven by ego). Transcending haumai (ego and self-centeredness) is a critical goal, as it obstructs spiritual progress and the attainment of mukti.

		Suggested learning activities: • Case Studies: Explore stories of Sikh Gurus and saints who demonstrated spiritual virtues, such as humility and compassion, to illustrate the concept of transcending ego (haumai). • Discussion: Have learners discuss how aligning with hukam might influence decision-making and behaviour in their daily lives. • Reflection: Encourage learners to reflect on what makes them human, using Sikh teachings to explore their own spiritual essence and actions. • 2. SC Sikhism - Action & Karma.pdf Resources: • The afterlife - Key beliefs in Sikhism - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - Edugas - BBC Bitesize • Reincarnation - SikhiWiki, free Sikh encyclopedia.
3.5.2e Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia - Sikh perspectives	Learners should understand: Sikh beliefs and teachings about medical ethics - abortion: • due to the cycle of samsara, there is no point at which a foetus or embryo is not living • life is sacred and is a gift from Waheguru; Guru Granth Sahib 921 • the atma (soul) enters the body at the moment of conception; Guru Granth Sahib 74 • the concept of daya (compassion), • the importance of intention behind actions • the concept of miri-piri – the balance between religious teachings and practical situations • in certain situations, Sikh ethics might support abortion as a compassionate choice • there is a recognition of the complex moral decisions that are often involved.	Learners should know that Sikhism holds that life is sacred and a gift from Waheguru (God), as expressed in the Guru Granth Sahib (921). All living beings, including a foetus or embryo, are viewed as part of the divine creation. In Sikh belief, samsara (the cycle of life, death, and rebirth) means that life exists in many forms, and there is no point at which a foetus or embryo is not considered alive. This view shapes the Sikh understanding of abortion and its moral implications. Sikhs believe the atma (soul) enters the body at the moment of conception, as stated in Guru Granth Sahib (74). The soul's presence in the foetus signifies the sanctity of life from its very beginning. Because of this belief, life, in any form, is considered valuable and deserving of respect. However, Sikh teachings on daya (compassion) also emphasise that the intention behind actions is crucial. Sikhs are encouraged to act with love and care for all living beings, and decisions should be made with consideration for the well-being of both the mother and

	Sikh beliefs and teachings about medical ethics – euthanasia: • a high value on the sanctity of life • an emphasis on compassion, moral responsibility, and acceptance of hukam (Waheguru's will) • all life is a gift from Waheguru; Guru Granth Sahib 921 • most Sikhs believe that the timing of birth and death should be left in the Wareguru's hands; Guru Granth Sahib 376 • suffering can be part of one's karmic cycle and lead to spiritual growth • euthanasia could be seen as disrupting the karmic journey towards mukti • daya (compassion) is a Sikh virtue • Sikh teachings would encourage providing palliative care and pain relief rather than hastening death • sewa (selfless service), involves caring for those in need.	the unborn child. Miri-piri, the balance between religious teachings and practical situations, allows for flexibility and acknowledges the complexity of real-life situations, including medical decisions like abortion. In some cases, Sikh ethics may support abortion, particularly in situations where the mother's health is at risk or when the pregnancy involves severe challenges. The principle of compassion often plays a key role in these decisions, recognising the difficult moral dilemmas involved. Suggested learning activities: • Discussion: Engage learners in a debate about the ethical dilemmas surrounding abortion, focusing on the balance between religious beliefs and the complex realities of personal circumstances. • Case Study: Present real-world examples where Sikh teachings on compassion and moral decision-making might be applied to medical ethics, such as in cases where abortion might be considered for health reasons. • Role-Play: Have learners role-play as ethical decision-makers, considering both the spiritual and practical aspects of abortion decisions through the lens of Sikh teachings. In Sikhism, life is considered sacred and a gift from Waheguru, as expressed in the Guru Granth Sahib (921). Sikhs believe that every living being is a creation of Waheguru, and therefore all life has inherent value and should be respected. This belief strongly influences Sikh teachings on issues such as euthanasia, where the sanctity of life remains a central concern. Sikhs place a high value on compassion (daya) and moral responsibility. While compassion is important, the teachings also emphasise acceptance of hukam, the divine will of Waheguru. Sikhs believe that both birth and death are part of the divine plan, and thus the timing of death should be left in Waheguru's hands (Guru Granth

		Sahib 376). Euthanasia, as an intentional act to end life, could be seen as disrupting the natural karmic journey, which may prevent individuals from completing their karmic cycle and achieving mukti (liberation). Suffering is sometimes viewed as a part of this cycle, offering opportunities for spiritual growth and the resolution of karma. Most Sikhs believe that while suffering should not be prolonged unnecessarily, it is important to provide palliative care and pain relief to ease the end of life, rather than hasten death through euthanasia. This reflects the Sikh value of sewa (selfless service), which encourages care for those in need, particularly during times of illness or death. Rather than focusing on ending life prematurely, Sikhs are taught to provide comfort, support, and daya (compassion) to the sick and dying. Suggested learning activities: • Discussion: Lead a class discussion on the ethical implications of euthanasia, exploring how compassion and respect for life are balanced in Sikhism. • Case Studies: Present case studies where a patient may request euthanasia and explore how Sikhs would approach such a situation based on teachings about suffering, karma, and hukam. • Role Play: Have learners role-play as medical professionals or family members who must decide on providing care for someone at the end of life, considering Sikh teachings on palliative care and sewa.

3.6e Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth - Sikh (Sikhi) perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.6.1e Freedom of religious expression - Sikh perspectives	Learners should understand: Sikh beliefs and teachings about the freedom of religious expression: • the concept of Sarbat da Bhala (well-being of all) respects the rights of individuals to follow their own religious beliefs • there are many paths to the Waheguru; Guru Granth Sahib 139 and 483 • Guru Tegh Bahadur sacrificed his life to protect the religious freedom of Hindus • Sikh leaders have allowed all religions to practice their faith freely (Maharajah Ranjit Singh's reign1801 to 1839) • Sikh Gurus consistently preached against coercion in matters of religion; Guru Granth Sahib 7 • the Adi Granth also includes writings from Hindu and Muslim writers who believed in the oneness of God • encourages Sikhs are encouraged to read the books of other religions for self-education; Rehat Maryada Chapter 10 • the kirpan symbolises the importance of defending the Sikh faith.	In Sikhism, freedom of religious expression is central to the belief in the well-being of all - Sarbat da Bhala. This concept emphasises that individuals have the right to follow their own religious beliefs and practice their faith without fear of persecution. Sikhism is fundamentally inclusive and respects the diversity of spiritual paths, recognising that there are many paths to Waheguru. As stated in the Guru Granth Sahib (139 and 483), Sikhs believe that all religions that lead to the truth and connect individuals to the divine are valid. One of the most powerful examples of Sikh commitment to religious freedom is the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, who sacrificed his life to protect the religious freedom of Hindus in the 17th century. The Guru stood against the forced conversion of Hindus to Islam, demonstrating the Sikh dedication to ensuring that individuals could follow their own beliefs without coercion. Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom remains a profound symbol of religious tolerance. Historically, Sikh leaders have supported the freedom of religious expression. Maharajah Ranjit Singh, the ruler of the Sikh Empire from 1801 to 1839, promoted religious tolerance and allowed people of all faiths to practice freely within his realm. His reign is an example of Sikhism in action, where religious diversity was celebrated. Sikh teachings consistently oppose the coercion of others into a particular faith. The Guru Granth Sahib (7) preaches that religion should not be imposed on anyone, and that true faith must come from personal conviction. Furthermore, the Adi Granth, which forms the foundation of Sikh scriptures, includes writings from Hindu and Muslim poets and saints who expressed their belief in the oneness of God, reinforcing the message of religious unity and mutual respect.

		In practice, Sikhs are encouraged to read and learn from the texts of other religions, as stated in the Rehat Maryada Chapter 10. This openness to learning fosters respect and understanding of diverse religious perspectives. The kirpan, one of the five Ks that Sikhs are encouraged to wear, symbolises the importance of defending both the Sikh faith and the freedom of others to express their beliefs. Suggested learning activities: • Real-life Example: Discuss the modern-day efforts of interfaith groups that promote religious tolerance, such as the Sikh Coalition in the U.S., which advocates for the protection of religious freedom, particularly for Sikhs facing discrimination. • Discussion: Lead a discussion on religious tolerance, using Guru Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice as a case study. Ask learners how they think Sikhs today can embody these teachings in a multicultural society. • Role Play: Have learners role-play scenarios in which they must protect someone's right to religious freedom, inspired by the values of Sarbat da Bhala and Guru Tegh Bahadur's actions. Resources: Sikh Rehat Maryada/ Sikh Rehat Maryadha

3.6.2e The use of personal wealth - Sikh perspectives	Learners should understand: Sikh beliefs and teachings about the use of personal wealth: • Sikhs are encouraged to set aside a portion of their income - daswandh (traditionally 10%) for charitable purposes and to support community welfare • 1 of the 3 pillars of Sikhism is Vand Chhako (giving) Guru Granth Sahib 1245 • the avoidance of a desire for excessive wealth • the encouragement of contentment through peace and spiritual fulfilment ; Guru Granth Sahib 286 • the pursuit of wealth should not lead to materialism or distract from spiritual goals; Guru Granth Sahib 5; Guru Granth Sahib 1331 • Sikhs should aim for their lives, to be gurmukh rather than manmukh • Sikhs need to transcend haumai (the ego - self-centredness).	In Sikhism, personal wealth is viewed not only as a means of providing for oneself and one's family, but also as a resource that can be used to contribute to the welfare of the community. A central teaching is the practice of daswandh, which encourages Sikhs to set aside a portion of their income, traditionally 10%, for charitable purposes. This practice fosters a spirit of selflessness and ensures that wealth is used in a way that benefits others. The idea behind this is to create a balance between personal gain and the greater good of society. One of the three pillars of Sikhism is Vand Chhako, which means to share with others. This concept, expressed in Guru Granth Sahib (1245), emphasises that true prosperity comes not from accumulating wealth, but from giving and sharing with those in need. Sikhs are encouraged to be generous and engage in acts of kindness and charity as an expression of their faith. Sikh teachings also caution against the desire for excessive wealth and materialism. The Guru Granth Sahib (286) encourages contentment, peace and spiritual fulfilment rather than the relentless pursuit of material possessions. Sikhs are reminded that wealth should not become an obsession or a distraction from spiritual growth. In Guru Granth Sahib (5) and (1331), it is stated that wealth should not define one's purpose in life, nor should it lead to ego-driven desires or self-centeredness. The goal for Sikhs is to live as gurmukh (aligned with the teachings of the Guru) rather than manmukh (driven by ego). Sikhs are also encouraged to transcend haumai (ego), which is seen as a major barrier to spiritual progress and union with Waheguru. The ego can create a desire for excessive wealth and material comforts, which leads individuals away from the true spiritual purpose of life.

		Suggested learning activities: • Real-Life Examples: Discuss how modern Sikh organisations, such as the Khalsa Aid charity, embody these principles by using resources to help those in need around the world, from disaster relief to supporting refugees. • Discussion: Lead a class discussion on the balance between personal wealth and community service, asking learners to explore whether they think wealth is an obstacle to spiritual growth. • Case Study: Present case studies of wealthy individuals or organisations that practice giving and philanthropy and discuss how these examples align with Sikh principles such as Vand Chhako and daswandh.

Non-religious perspectives

3.7 Roles, rights and responsibilities: stewardship of the earth – non-religious perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.7.1 Humanity's relationship with the natural world – non-religious perspectives	Learners should understand: Non-religious perspectives about humanity's relationship with the natural world: • the interconnectedness of all living things • humans have the capacity to reason and foresee the consequences of their actions • environmental justice – to protect vulnerable populations from environmental harm. How the aims and work Humanist Climate Action reflect humanist beliefs about caring for the world. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about humanity's relationship with the natural world.	For many non-religious people, humanity's relationship with the natural world will include ethical, practical, and scientific matters. Non-religious perspectives often highlight the biological and ecological interconnections of all living things. Humans are part of a larger ecosystem, where actions affecting one species or the environment can affect others. This understanding promotes sustainable practices, such as reducing waste and using reusable energy sources. Non-religious people might suggest that human intelligence allows for critical thinking, scientific discovery, and ethical reflection. This capacity enables humans to predict the environmental impact of their actions, make informed decisions, and take responsibility for ensuring the long-term health of the planet. Non-religious people will promote fairness in addressing environmental issues, emphasising that marginalized or vulnerable groups should not disproportionately bear the burden of pollution, resource depletion, or climate change. This principle comes from beliefs in equal human rights, equity, and social responsibility.

		Humanist Climate Action: Humanist Climate Action (humanists.uk) 'Humanist Climate Action is a volunteer-led network of Humanists UK members and supporters committed to redefining lifestyles and campaigning for policies that promote low-carbon, ethical, and sustainable living in the light of the degeneration of the Earth's climate and biodiversity. We bring humanists together to facilitate individual and collective action on these issues.' (from the Humanist Climate Action website). Humanists believe in individual agency and collective effort to create positive change. Humanist Climate Action encourages people to take practical steps to reduce environmental harm, reflecting their commitment to ethical living and responsibility. They share tips and resources to help individuals reduce their carbon footprint, such as adopting plant-based diets or minimizing waste. The organisation encourages others to address climate change using evidence-based strategies such as renewable energy and conservation, and campaigns for policies and actions that protect the planet for current and future generations, such as changes to reduce carbon emissions. This reflects their belief in reason and science as tools for progress. Additionally, due to their belief in the interconnectedness of humanity and the natural world, Humanist Climate Action are keen to raise awareness of the shared duty to care for the environment. They do this through organising activities such as tree planting drives and clean-up campaigns. This allows them to act ethically and to work together for the common good. By addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations, Humanist Climate Action upholds the humanist commitment to fairness, compassion, and protecting human dignity.

		Suggested learning activity: • Research the work of the Humanist Climate Action group and create a presentation on how their work reflects Humanist beliefs about caring for the world. There are similarities and differences in religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about humanity's relationship with the natural world. For example: Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious perspectives recognise the importance of protecting the environment. They emphasise its core value and important role in sustaining life. • Both perspectives advocate for responsible stewardship of the Earth, encouraging humanity to care for the natural world for the benefit of all living things, and current and future generations. • Many religious and non-religious viewpoints acknowledge the interconnectedness of life, highlighting the impact of human actions on ecosystems and other species. Differences: • Religious perspectives often view humanity's relationship with nature as divinely ordained, for example, Christians believe that humans are stewards of God's creation. Non-religious views are typically grounded in scientific understanding, ethical reasoning, and a sense of shared human responsibility. • Religious believers may see the natural world as sacred or reflective of divine presence, giving it spiritual significance. Non-religious perspectives usually focus on the material and ecological importance of nature without attributing spiritual meaning. • Religious motivations may stem from teachings about divine commands or moral duties to care for the planet. They may feel they have an accountability to God to carry out this role. Non-religious motivations are often driven by an evidence-based understanding, and ethical principles like fairness and justice.

		Suggested learning activity: • Create a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences in religious and non-religious perspectives on this topic. Suggested learning activity: Humanist building (understandinghumanism.org.uk)
3.7.2 Animal rights – non-religious perspectives	Learners should understand: Non-religious perspectives on animal rights: • Animal Welfare Act 2022 recognises that animals are sentient beings • the concept of speciesism • the concept of Deep Ecology • commitment to preserving biodiversity and maintaining healthy ecosystems. Non-religious perspectives on using animals for human benefit: • concerns about the humane treatment of animals in food production • for some, the promotion of veganism or vegetarianism • concerns about the impact of animal agriculture and industrial farming practices on the environment and on humans. Non-religious perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research: • justified where it could lead to significant human medical advancements, minimising harm and trying to find alternatives (such as computer modelling)	Non-religious perspectives on animal rights are varied but generally they will rely on ethical reasoning, scientific understanding, and principles of fairness. Non-religious people may argue that animals deserve moral consideration because they are capable of experiencing pain, pleasure, and emotion. The suffering of animals should be weighed equally with human suffering, with the goal of decisions always being avoidance of harm to all living beings. Knowledge of animal behaviour and intelligence supports the idea that animals have intrinsic value and should not be treated merely as resources for human use. Non-religious views often call for reforms in areas like factory farming, animal testing, and habitat destruction, promoting practices like veganism, sustainable living, and wildlife conservation. The Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act was passed in 2022 in the UK, and it formally recognises that animals are sentient beings, acknowledging their capacity to experience pleasure, pain and emotion. The Act also established an Animal Sentience Committee, which is responsible for evaluating the impact of government policies on animal welfare. This committee ensures that policymakers consider animal well-being in decision-making processes, reflecting a commitment to higher animal welfare standards across the UK. The new Law also included harsher punishments and longer prison sentences for those found guilty of animal cruelty offences. Suggested learning activity: • Learners could debate animal rights and welfare, and whether animals have the same rights as humans.

	• a concern that the prohibition of animal research could hinder scientific and medical progress • a concern that some research on animals has resulted in harm to humans (e.g. thalidomide) for some, that animals and should not be used as a means to an end. How the aims and work of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals reflect non-religious perspectives about animal rights. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about animal rights.	Speciesism is the belief or practice of giving unequal moral consideration or value to beings based solely on their species. It often involves prioritising human interests over those of animals without justification. Examples of speciesism can include exploiting animals for food, clothing or entertainment while disregarding their suffering, or treating animals as inferior, despite their capacity for suffering. Deep Ecology is an environmental philosophy that emphasises the value of all living beings and the interconnectedness of life forms and ecosystems. It challenges the worldview that places humans at the centre of all decisions, and instead encourages a perspective centred around the natural world, where nature is valued not just for its usefulness to humans but for its own sake. Supporters of this philosophy may call for changes in human lifestyles, economic systems and attitudes in order to reduce environmental harm and create a deeper connection to the natural world. A commitment to preserving biodiversity and maintaining healthy ecosystems involves recognising that diverse life forms and functioning ecosystems are essential for the well-being of the planet and humanity. This viewpoint would focus on protecting biodiversity through the conservation of species and ecosystems to ensure their resilience and adaptability in the face of climate change. Those who support this view would ensure the maintenance of balanced and functioning ecosystems that provide essential services, such as clean air and water, pollination, soil fertility, and climate regulation. They would also raise awareness of and promote practices that protect natural habitats, reduce pollution and prevent species extinction, ensuring resources are available for current and future generations. Suggested learning activity: • There are some suggestions to be found here: Ecosystems | Education Nature Park

		Non-religious perspectives on using animals for human benefit often focus on ethical reasoning, compassion, and environmental sustainability. Many non-religious people are concerned about the treatment of animals in food production. They may oppose factory farming practices that cause unnecessary suffering to animals, such as overcrowding, inhumane handling, and painful procedures. They would emphasise the need for reducing harm to animals and treating them with respect and care. For some, in order to promote veganism or vegetarianism, they may adopt these diets to avoid contributing to animal exploitation and suffering. These lifestyles are seen as ethical choices that support the reduction of harm and promotion of animal rights and welfare. Suggested learning activity: • Classroom Resources for RE (RE Today) - Veganism in Education (teachvine.org) Animal agriculture is a leading contributor to deforestation, greenhouse gas emissions, and water pollution. Non-religious perspectives emphasise the need for sustainable practices to mitigate climate change, conserve resources and reduce the environmental burden on vulnerable populations. Examples could include rotational grazing, where livestock are moved between different pasture areas to prevent overgrazing and improve soil health, integrated pest management (IPM), which controls pests without relying on harmful chemicals, and improved manure management, where proper handling and storage of manure can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prevent water contamination, and provide a valuable fertilizer for crops. Non-religious perspectives on the use of animals in scientific and medical research focus on minimizing harm and balancing potential benefits with moral responsibilities.

		Non-religious perspectives often accept the use of animals in research if it can lead to substantial medical benefits, such as life-saving treatments. However, they emphasise minimizing harm to animals and promoting alternatives, such as computer modelling or synthetic biology, to reduce the need for animal testing. Computer modelling in animal testing involves using advanced computer simulations and algorithms to predict the effects of substances or treatments on living organisms, without the need for actual animal testing. This method uses data from previous studies, biological knowledge and mathematical models to simulate how chemicals, drugs or treatments might work. While this reduces the need for animals, computer modelling is still being refined and may not yet fully replace animal testing in all fields. Some argue that banning animal research could slow down important scientific and medical advancements, as animals have been essential in understanding disease processes and testing treatments, particularly when human trials are not yet possible. There is concern that animal research, like the testing of thalidomide, has sometimes led to harmful outcomes for humans due to inaccurate predictions of effects. For some, this raises the ethical issue that animals should not be treated as tools for human benefit, and alternative methods should be sought. Suggested learning activities: Teaching Resources: Understanding Animal Research RSPCA Animals Used in Research KS4 Lesson Plan – Animals Used in Testing: A Debate - Teachwire Is it ever right to experiment on animals? - BBC Teach The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) works to promote animal rights through advocacy and activism. PETA emphasises that animals deserve moral consideration, irrespective of how useful they are to humans. This reflects the non-religious

		view that opposes speciesism and calls for the equal treatment of animals. PETA campaigns to end practices like factory farming, animal testing, and the use of animals for entertainment. This shows their belief that it is ethically right to reduce harm and promote compassionate treatment of animals. PETA also supports and advocates for alternative methods, such as plant-based diets, cruelty-free products, and non-animal testing methods (like computer modelling (see above)). This reflects a non-religious commitment to using science and reason to find humane alternatives. More information can be found here: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals | Animal Rights in the UK (peta.org.uk) There are similarities and differences in the religious and non-religious believers' perspectives on animal rights. For example: Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious perspectives advocate for treating animals with respect and minimizing unnecessary harm. • They agree on the importance of compassion and ethical treatment of animals. • Both groups generally oppose cruelty to animals, advocating for humane treatment in practices such as food production, research, and entertainment. Differences: • Religious perspectives often base their views on divine teachings, for example, Christians see humans as stewards of God's creation with a responsibility to protect animals. • Religious teachings may shape specific practices, such as dietary restrictions or animal sacrifice. • Non-religious perspectives typically ground their views in secular

		ethics, such as utilitarianism or rights-based frameworks, emphasising the capacity to suffer as a reason for moral consideration. • Religious believers may view animals as creations meant for human use (e.g., for food or work) but still promote humane treatment of them. • Non-religious believers often argue for animal rights based on their value, asserting that animals should not be used as means to human ends, regardless of the benefit they provide to humans.

3.8 Roles, rights and responsibilities: human nature and the right to life – non-religious perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.8.1 What makes us human – non-religious perspectives	Learners should understand: Non-religious perspectives on what makes us human: • humans are a defined species • physical traits such as large brains and the ability to use complex language and symbols • possess self-consciousness • possess autonomy – free will, and are moral agents capable of distinguishing right from wrong • can explore the quest for life's meaning and purpose. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about what makes us human.	Non-religious perspectives on what makes us human focus on scientific, philosophical, and ethical understandings of human nature. From a biological perspective, humans (Homo sapiens) are a distinct species, identifiable by unique genetic makeup and evolutionary history. Humans are characterised by their advanced cognitive abilities, including a large brain relative to body size, and their capacity for abstract thought, language, and communication. Humans possess self-consciousness, and are therefore aware of themselves as individuals, capable of reflecting on their own existence, thoughts, and emotions. Non-religious perspectives emphasize that humans possess autonomy and therefore have the capacity to make choices and act as moral agents, guided by reason, empathy, and ethical principles. Humans seek meaning and purpose through personal reflection, relationships, creativity, and understanding the universe, often guided by philosophical or scientific inquiry rather than religious beliefs. Suggested learning activities: • Read the following viewpoints and write a response to each one, incorporating a personal response to their view. Individual humanist statements.indd (understandinghumanism.org.uk) • Complete the following task: Human beings humanist responses (understandinghumanism.org.uk) • Useful video resource: (20) One Life, Live it Well | with Alice Roberts - YouTube There are similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about what makes us human. For example:

		Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious perspectives acknowledge that humans are a distinctive species due to their advanced cognitive abilities, such as reasoning, self-awareness, and language use. • Both views agree that humans possess a sense of morality, enabling them to know right from wrong and make ethical decisions. • Both perspectives recognise humans' desire to explore life's meaning and purpose, although they differ in how this is approached. Differences: • Religious perspectives often attribute what makes us human to divine creation, emphasising a soul or spiritual essence within each human being. However, non-religious perspectives view human characteristics as products of evolution, emphasising biology and cultural background. • Religious believers may base moral capacities on divine laws or teachings, such as the Ten Commandments, whereas non-religious believers base morality in reason, empathy, and the values of society rather than a higher power. • Religious perspectives often link human purpose to fulfilling a divine plan or achieving spiritual goals. However, non-religious perspectives see purpose as self-determined, shaped by individual choices, relationships, and contributions to society.

3.8.2 Medical ethics: abortion and euthanasia – non-religious perspectives	Learners should understand: Non-religious perspectives on abortion: • take different sides of the Pro-Choice vs. Pro-Life debate • some argue it should be based on personal autonomy • some stress the need for a legal framework to access abortion • some want full access to abortion services as necessary to protect women's health • some believe that personhood develops later in the pregnancy and allow early abortions • a consideration of the individual situation and the consequences • concerns about the 'slippery slope'. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about abortion. Non-religious perspectives on euthanasia: • different views on when a person ceases to exist • personal autonomy and quality of life – the right to die • rational, informed, legal decision-making based on medical advice and personal values • the need for a clear legal framework to protect patients and healthcare providers. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about euthanasia.	Non-religious perspectives on abortion are diverse and based on ethical reasoning and practical considerations. Non-religious people hold varying views, with some supporting the women's right to choose (Pro-Choice) and others opposing abortion based on the value of potential life (Pro-Life). Many non-religious individuals emphasise a woman's right to make decisions about her own body, viewing abortion as a matter of personal freedom and autonomy. Ensuring safe and legal access to abortion services is seen by many non-religious people as essential to protecting women from unsafe, illegal procedures, and a legal framework is essential for this. Non-religious people often highlight the importance of abortion access to safeguard the physical and mental health of women, particularly if they are facing medical complications or personal hardship. Some argue that personhood, or having the status of a human being, occurs later in pregnancy. This means that they may support early abortions while opposing later abortions except in extreme cases, such as the woman's life being in danger. There isn't an answer that suits all, and non-religious perspectives may emphasise the need for an evaluation of the context and consequences of an abortion for all involved before making a decision. Some worry that expanding abortion rights for women without clear guidelines could lead to ethical issues, such as devaluing life or extending the practice beyond reasonable limits. Suggested learning activity: • Abortion humanist perspective (understandinghumanism.org.uk) There are similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about abortion. For example:

		Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious perspectives acknowledge that abortion is a morally complex issue that requires careful consideration. • Both may recognise the intrinsic value of human life and the need to consider the rights of the foetus and the rights of the pregnant woman. • Both perspectives may express concern for the physical and emotional well-being of the pregnant woman. Differences: • Religious perspectives often base their views on teachings from sacred texts or doctrines, for example, Christians would suggest that life is a gift from God and is therefore sacred from conception. However, non-religious perspectives rely on ethical reasoning and scientific understanding, without referencing divine authority. • Religious believers may state that life begins at conception, making abortion morally wrong in most or all cases. However, non-religious believers may argue that personhood develops later in pregnancy, therefore supporting early abortions while opposing or evaluating later abortions. • Religious perspectives may prioritise the sanctity of life over individual choice. Non-religious perspectives often emphasise personal autonomy and the right of the pregnant individual to make decisions about her own body. • Religious perspectives may campaign for stricter laws on abortion based on moral or religious beliefs. Conversely, non-religious perspectives may stress the need for legal frameworks that ensure safe, accessible abortion services while respecting individual rights.

		Non-religious perspectives on euthanasia are varied and diverse. For example, there are a variety of opinions on when the life of a person ends, which could be based on biological or neurological principles, such as brain death. A person's idea of when life ends may affect their view on euthanasia. Many non-religious individuals may argue that each person has the right to make decisions about their own life, including when it ends. This is particularly true in cases where a person may be experiencing unbearable suffering or if they have limited quality of life. Non-religious perspectives emphasise the importance of rational, well-informed decisions. They would suggest that the choice to receive euthanasia should be fully evaluated and made in consultation with medical professionals. It is also very important to ensure that proper legal protection is in place for patients and medical professionals so as to avoid abuse of the process, allowing individuals to make a decision that is voluntary and without coercion. Suggested learning activity: • Euthanasia humanist perspective (understandinghumanism.org.uk) • Useful video resource: Should assisted suicide be legalised? | Religious Studies - Matters of Life and Death - YouTube There are similarities and differences in religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about euthanasia. For example: Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious perspectives agree that life is valuable and deserving of respect. • Religious and non-religious people acknowledge the importance of addressing human suffering. They suggest that anyone facing terminal illness or severe pain must be treated with compassion.

		• Both groups recognise euthanasia as a morally complex issue requiring careful consideration. Differences: • Religious perspectives often view life as sacred and given by a higher power, for example, Christians believe that only God has the authority to end a life. However, non-religious perspectives base their views on ethical reasoning and the quality of life of the person. • Religious believers may prioritise the sanctity of life over individual choice, therefore opposing euthanasia as it interferes with God's plan. Non-religious believers often emphasise personal autonomy, suggesting that people have the right to make decisions about their own life. • Religious perspectives often oppose euthanasia entirely, though some may allow exceptions in extreme cases based on compassion. Non-religious perspectives are more likely to support euthanasia when the decision is made with rational and informed consent. • Religious believers may oppose the legalisation of euthanasia, as it could be open to misuse. However, many non-religious believers often support clear legal frameworks to regulate euthanasia, as a way of ensuring it is voluntary and safeguarded against misuse.

3.9 Roles, rights and responsibilities: freedom of religious expression and the use of personal wealth – non-religious perspectives		
Content Amplification		**Teacher Guidance**
3.9.1 Freedom of religious expression – non-religious perspectives	Learners should understand: Non-religious perspectives on freedom of religious expression: • a fundamental human right that promotes individual autonomy and dignity • is not absolute, it should be limited when it conflicts with other rights or public order • freedom of religious expression is enshrined in law in the UK – Human Rights Act 1998 • support for a pluralistic society • support for the need for a clear separation between religion and government • some would oppose faith schools • laws and policies should not favour religious expression or symbols over secular ones • restrictions on the use of religious symbols or proselytizing in public schools, government offices, or other state-controlled spaces. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about freedom of religious expression.	Non-religious perspectives on freedom of religious expression focus on balancing the rights of individuals with fairness and unity within society. Non-religious perspectives recognise the freedom of religious believers to express themselves as essential to their personal autonomy. All individuals should be free to follow their beliefs without coercion or conflict. However, while freedom of expression is valued, it should be restricted when it infringes on the rights of others, incites harm or disturbs public order. The Human Rights Act of 1988 protects the rights of all believers to express their religious beliefs. This ensures that this freedom and right is legally recognised and safeguarded within society. Non-religious perspectives often promote a society that welcomes diversity, called a pluralistic society, which will allow different beliefs and worldviews to coexist respectfully. They may also emphasise the need for the government in society to be entirely secular (non-religious) to ensure fairness and prevent religious bias in state matters and decisions. Laws and policies should be neutral, and always ensure that no preference is given to religious symbols, beliefs or practices. Some non-religious groups, such as Humanists, are concerned that faith schools may promote religious exclusivity or even indoctrinate their pupils in a way that conflicts with secular values. They may also suggest that faith schools do not contribute towards a pluralistic society. To maintain an inclusive society, non-religious individuals often support limitations on explicitly religious displays or practices in public places. They would also be against public evangelisation, and may suggest that this could be seen as enforcing beliefs on others.

		Suggested learning activity: • Case Study Analysis – Present real-life examples of legal cases, such as rulings on wearing religious symbols in public spaces or faith schools in the UK. Learners work in pairs to analyse the case, identify key issues, and discuss how they would resolve the situation. There are similarities and differences in religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about freedom of expression. For example: Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious believers value freedom of religious expression as a fundamental right. They recognise that it is extremely important for personal autonomy and dignity. • Both perspectives oppose discrimination based on religion or belief and will actively encourage fairness and equality in society. • Religious and non-religious believers may emphasise the need for mutual respect for all, in order to create a peaceful and harmonious pluralistic society. Differences: • Religious believers may support visible religious expression in public spaces, including government and schools, as an extension of their faith. However, non-religious believers often support secularism, arguing that religion and state should be separate in order to ensure objectivity. • Religious perspectives may want fewer restrictions on religious expression, suggesting that faith practices are essential human rights. Non-religious perspectives often support limits on religious expression when it conflicts with other rights or public order.

		• Religious believers may support faith schools as a way to pass on their traditions and values, and to support families in their religious lives. Non-religious believers often oppose faith schools, viewing them as inconsistent with a pluralistic society. • Religious believers may see wearing or displaying religious symbols as an essential part of their identity and expression. For example, Christians often wear a cross or crucifix to reflect their belief in Jesus. Non-religious believers often oppose displays of religious symbols in public spaces to maintain inclusivity.
3.9.2 The use of personal wealth – non-religious perspectives	Learners should understand: Non-religious perspectives on the use of personal wealth: • personal wealth as a tool to improve the quality of life for oneself and others • personal wealth can contribute to comfort and security, but it is not the sole determinant of happiness • spending money on goods and services is a driver of economic growth for all and brings personal satisfaction • wealth is useful but should not lead to greed. The similarities and differences between religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about the use of personal wealth.	Non-religious perspectives on the use of personal wealth focus on ethical and practical views. Wealth is often seen as a means to enhance well-being and to provide opportunities for personal growth. Money can often give a person a comfortable lifestyle, while also being able to help others in society through charitable actions or contributions. Financial security can improve a person's well-being, but it does not determine happiness. Non-religious perspectives often emphasise that, while wealth can provide material security and reduce stress, true happiness is found in relationships, purpose and personal fulfilment. Non-religious people may suggest that using wealth to purchase goods and services not only meets individual needs and wants, but also stimulates the economy, creating jobs and broader advantages for society. Non-religious thinkers often warn against prioritising the gaining of wealth over ethical behaviour or social responsibility. They would support generosity and care for others as a priority over wealth. There are similarities and differences in religious and non-religious believers' perspectives about the use of personal wealth. For example:

		Similarities: • Both religious and non-religious perspectives acknowledge that wealth can improve the quality of life by providing comfort, security, and opportunities for individuals. • Both views stress that wealth should be used responsibly, with an emphasis on not exploiting others or engaging in harmful practices. • Both perspectives encourage sharing wealth with others, for example, through charity and helping those in need. Differences: • Religious perspectives often refer to the responsible use of wealth in terms of divine teachings or moral obligations, such as the duty to care for the poor. However, non-religious perspectives may focus on personal responsibility and working towards the common good. • Religious believers may place more importance on the spiritual significance of wealth. In fact, some religious people will suggest detaching oneself from material possessions in order to focus on spiritual growth. For example, monks and nuns will take a vow of poverty. Non-religious believers are more likely to view wealth as a tool to be used for the benefit of oneself and others. • Religious believers might view generosity as an act of fulfilling God's will, such as tithing (giving a percentage of wealth to the Church) or giving to charity as part of their religious duty. Non-religious believers tend to focus on charity work as a choice based on personal values or the good of society rather than it being a religious obligation.

		Suggested learning activities: • Debate: Divide the class into two groups, one representing religious perspectives and the other representing non-religious perspectives. • Ask the learners to debate a scenario, such as 'all people should give 50% of their wealth away to good causes.' Encourage learners to explain and defend their given perspective while learning about the ethical principles behind each view. Wealth allocation game: Provide learners with a hypothetical amount of money and a list of spending options (e.g., personal luxuries, charity, community projects, investments). In pairs or groups, learners decide how to allocate the money, considering either religious or non-religious values. Groups explain their decisions and discuss how their given perspective influenced their choices, comparing and contrasting with others.

Glossary of terms for Unit 3

Christianity

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
conception	The moment when a sperm cell fertilises an egg cell, which marks the beginning of a new human life.
creator ex nihilo	The belief that God created the universe 'from nothing'.
dominion	Dominion is the authority or power over creation given to human beings by God, as described in Genesis 1:26-28.
embryo	An embryo is the early stage of human development, from the moment of conception until approximately the eighth week of pregnancy, after which the developing baby is referred to as a foetus.
euthanasia	From Greek, eu 'good' + thanatos 'death'. Sometimes referred to as 'mercy killing. The act of killing a person, either directly or indirectly, because a decision has been reached that death would be the best option.
evangelisation	The act of sharing the message of the Gospel and spreading the teachings of Jesus Christ to others, often through word, example, and charitable actions, to invite them into a relationship with God.
free will	The ability to make choices (particularly moral choices) voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is predetermined. In Christianity, it refers to the God-given capacity for humans to choose between good and evil, enabling moral responsibility.
God	The Supreme, eternal, and omnipotent being in monotheistic religions like Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. God is understood as the creator and sustainer of the universe, who exists beyond time and space.
imago dei	'in the image of God'. The belief that human beings are uniquely a reflection of God's personhood. Unlike the other animals, human beings are rational, free and moral.
laudato si	An encyclical letter written by Pope Francis in 2015, addressing the care of creation, environmental stewardship, and the urgent need to combat climate change.

original sin	Human beings inherit a fallen nature and a tendency to sin as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden.
palliative care	Care provided to reduce the pain and suffering of terminally ill patients and make their end of life as comfortable as possible.
Prosperity gospel	The Prosperity Gospel is a belief that financial blessing is a sign of God’s favour and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes can lead to greater wealth.
sanctity of life	The belief that life is precious, or sacred because humans are made 'in God's image'. For many religious believers, only human life holds this special status.
soul	The spiritual aspect of a being; that which connects someone to God. The soul is often regarded as non-physical and as living on after physical death, in an afterlife.
stewardship	The belief that humans have a God-given responsibility to care for, protect, and manage the earth and its resources wisely, ensuring they are preserved for future generations.
sustainability	Using natural resources in a way that can be sustained over a long period of time.

Catholic Christianity

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
Catechism of the Catholic Church	The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) is a comprehensive summary of Catholic teachings and beliefs. It provides an official presentation of Church doctrine, covering topics such as the Creed, sacraments, moral life, and prayer. The Catechism serves as a guide for Catholics to understand their faith and live according to its principles.
conception	The moment when a sperm cell fertilises an egg cell, which marks the beginning of a new human life.
creator ex nihilo	The belief that God created the universe 'from nothing'.
Doctrine of Double Effect	The Doctrine of Double Effect is a moral principle that is used in very specific circumstances. An action may have two effects: one intended and good, and another unintended but foreseen and harmful. The primary purpose of the action must be good, even though a negative effect may occur, and the bad effect must not be intended. In other words, it is unavoidable but not directly willed. The good effect must outweigh the bad: The positive outcome must be proportionate to, or greater than, the negative effect. For example, a woman may undergo treatment that saves her life but indirectly results in the loss of her unborn child. The primary intention is to save the mother's life, not to harm the child.
dominion	Dominion is the authority or power over creation given to human beings by God, as described in Genesis 1:26-28.
embryo	An embryo is the early stage of human development, from the moment of conception until approximately the eighth week of pregnancy, after which the developing baby is referred to as a foetus.
euthanasia	From Greek, eu 'good' + thanatos 'death'. Sometimes referred to as 'mercy killing. The act of killing a person, either directly or indirectly, because a decision has been reached that death would be the best option.
evangelisation	The act of sharing the message of the Gospel and spreading the teachings of Jesus Christ to others, often through word, example, and charitable actions, to invite them into a relationship with God.

free will	The ability to make choices (particularly moral choices) voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is predetermined. In Christianity, it refers to the God-given capacity for humans to choose between good and evil, enabling moral responsibility.
God	The Supreme, eternal, and omnipotent being in monotheistic religions like Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. God is understood as the creator and sustainer of the universe, who exists beyond time and space.
imago dei	'in the image of God'. The belief that human beings are uniquely a reflection of God's personhood. Unlike the other animals, human beings are rational, free and moral.
Laudato Si	An encyclical letter written by Pope Francis in 2015, addressing the care of creation, environmental stewardship, and the urgent need to combat climate change.
original sin	Human beings inherit a fallen nature and a tendency to sin as a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden.
palliative care	Care provided to reduce the pain and suffering of terminally ill patients and make their end of life as comfortable as possible.
Prosperity gospel	The Prosperity Gospel is a belief that financial blessing is a sign of God's favour and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes can lead to greater wealth.
sanctity of life	The belief that life is precious, or sacred because humans are made 'in God's image'. For many religious believers, only human life holds this special status.
soul	The spiritual aspect of a being; that which connects someone to God. The soul is often regarded as non-physical and as living on after physical death, in an afterlife.
stewardship	The belief that humans have a God-given responsibility to care for, protect, and manage the earth and its resources wisely, ensuring they are preserved for future generations.
sustainability	Using natural resources in a way that can be sustained over a long period of time.

Buddhism

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
ahimsa	The First Precept, not to harm any living being and to practice non-violence.
arhat	One who is worthy. In Theravada Buddhism, this describes one who has achieved the highest state attainable in this life i.e. enlightenment.
Bodhisattva	An enlightened being, who postpones his own enlightenment in order to seek enlightenment for others by continuing on the wheel of samsara rather than accepting Nirvana/Nibbana.
Buddhahood	The condition and state of being a buddha. It is the universal goal for Mahayana Buddhists.
Buddha-nature	(tathagatagarbha) in Mahayana Buddhism it is the underlying state of all things, therefore the potential of all beings.
Dalai Lama	The spiritual and political leader of the Tibetan people, in exile. He is considered to be a manifestation of the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. Tenzin Gyatso is the current – and 14th – Dalai Lama. '*Dalai*' means ocean of wisdom, '*lama*' is a teacher.
dana	Generous giving, charity.
dharma	Teachings of the Buddha.
euthanasia	From Greek, *eu* 'good' + *thanatos* 'death'. Sometimes referred to as mercy killing. The act of killing a person, either directly or indirectly, because a decision has been reached that death would be the best option.
Five Precepts	Five rules, or more accurately goals to live up to for all Buddhists. Buddhists aim to refrain from: • harming living things, • taking what is not freely given, • sexual misconduct, • misuse of speech, • clouding the mind with intoxicating substances.
Jataka Tales	Stories that describe the previous existences of the Buddha, they can be found in the Sutta Pitaka in the Pali Canon.
karma	The belief that positive intentions and actions have a positive impact on rebirth, and negative intentions and actions have a negative impact on rebirth.
karuna	Compassion for all living beings.

lakshanas	The three marks of existence, the truth of everyone's life – anatta (no permanent self), anicca (everything is impermanent), dukkha (suffering).
Mahayana	'Great Vehicle'; a more liberal, progressive version of Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism recognises a large amount of scripture outside of the Pali canon.
metta	Loving kindness.
Middle Way	The rejection of the extremes of comfort and asceticism. The idea of a middle way is very important in Buddhism and is a philosophical idea as well as a way of life.
nirvana	A state of peace and joy, achieve once craving has been overcome.
Pali Canon	The Tipitaka ('three baskets', made up of the Vinaya Pitaka, the Sutta Pitaka and the Abidhamma Pitaka); the body of scripture held to be authoritative by Theravada Buddhists.
parinirvana	The state entered after death by someone who has attained nirvana during their lifetime.
pratitya samutpada	Dependent origination; a description of reality, denoting that all phenomena are causally linked.
Right Action	Part of the morality section (sila) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to behave.
Right Concentration	Part of the meditation section (samadhi) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to develop deep states of mental focus and clarity.
Right Effort	Part of the meditation section (samadhi) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to cultivate positive mental states and prevent unwholesome ones.
Right Intention	Part of the meditation section (samadhi) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to think.
Right Livelihood	Part of the morality section (sila) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful/positive ways that a Buddhist can earn a living.
Right Mindfulness	Part of the meditation section (samadhi) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to be aware of the present moment and one's thoughts, feelings, and surroundings.
Right Speech	Part of the morality section (sila) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to speak truthfully, kindly, and helpfully.
Right View	Part of the wisdom section (panna) of the Eightfold Path; it sets out skilful ways to understand reality and the nature of existence.
samsara	The cycle of life, death and rebirth.
sentient	The ability to experience feelings and sensations.

Theravada	'The Way of the Elders'; the more traditional of the two major traditions of Buddhism. They accept only the teachings of the Pali Canon.
Three Poisons	Greed, hatred and ignorance – negative emotions that keep someone in samsara.
Triratna	The 'Three Jewels' to which Buddhists 'go for refuge': • The Buddha, • The Dharma (Dhamma) • The Sangha.
upaya	'skilful means', a theme found in the Mahayana scripture (Lotus Sutra). It refers to the ability of enlightened beings to use whatever resources are available to help people on the path to enlightenment.
Vinaya	The first section of the Pali Canon, it contains the code of discipline for monks (Sangha).
Wheel of Life	The Tibetan Wheel of Life depicts the Buddhist concept of pratitya samutpada, the way things exists and are interdependent.

Hinduism

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
Advaita	Non-dualism. Brahman and the atman are the same.
ahimsa	Non-injury to living things; the doctrine of non-violence.
antaryami	Often used to describe Brahman as the source of all life and in all things.
artha	One of the four aims of human life – wealth and power.
ashrama	The four stages of life: • the student stage - Brahmacari • the householder stage - Grihasta • the retired life/hermit stage - Vanaprastha • the wandering monk stage – Sannyasa.
asuri Sampad	Demonic or evil qualities within a person that prevents them attaining Moksha.
atman	The individual self or soul, which is believed to be non-physical and return to Brahman once moksha is achieved.
avatar	The incarnations (divine becoming human) of a deity, sometimes in human form; most commonly used is Vishnu, the Preserver God, who was incarnated as Krishna.
Bhagavad Gita	The Hindu holy book; the “Song of the Lord”.
Bhagavata Purana	The Hindu holy book written in Sanskrit that promotes devotion to Krishna.
bhakti	Devotion. In bhakti traditions it is believed that love of God is the path to moksha (spiritual liberation).
Brahman	The supreme power in the Universe; ultimate reality; God.
Chandogya Upanishad	One of the oldest Upanishads it is a core text for Vedanta Hinduism. It contains information on reincarnation and the consequences of karma.
dana	The practice of generosity.
daivi Sampad	Divine or good qualities within a person that helps them attain Moksha.
deity	A god or goddess.
dharma	The religious and moral duty in relation to a person’s status in Hindu society, considered by many, but not all, to be linked to caste.
Dvaita	The belief that the atman (soul) is distinctive from Brahman.

euthanasia	From Greek, eu ‘good’ + thanatos ‘death’. Sometimes referred to as ‘mercy killing. The act of killing a person, either directly or indirectly, because a decision has been reached that death would be the best option.
Ganesh	The elephant-headed God; god of good beginnings; symbol of luck and remover of obstacles. He is often the first to be worshipped.
Garbhopanishad	This is a minor Upanishad written in Sanskrit. It is an Upanishad that comments on medical and physiology themed issues.
Gau Mata	Worship of the cow.
Gunas	The attributes of nature. There are three within Hinduism, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.
Hanuman	God of the monkeys. He is seen in the Ramayana helping Rama to rescue Sita from the demon king Ravana.
Isha Upanishad	One of the shortest Upanishads and the final chapter of the Yajurveda. It is a short poem.
ISKCON	International Society for Krishna Consciousness, also known as the Hare Krishna movement.
kama	One of the four aims of human life meaning worldly pleasure.
karma	The belief that actions, and the consequences of these actions, determine whether the atman will be released from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth; one can gain both positive and/or negative karma.
karma yoga	Selfless action.
karuna	The showing of compassion.
Mahabharata	One of the two epics In Hindu literature. It narrates the war between two groups of cousins, the Pandavas and Kauravas. The Bhagavad Gita is part of the Mahabharata.
Manu Smirti	Also known as the laws of Manu. It is one of the legal texts within Hinduism.
maya	A love of money, possessions and family which keeps a Hindu bound to this world.
moksha	Release from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth; spiritual liberation; ultimate union with God.
papa	Actions that lead to negative results and spiritually degrade a person.
prakriti	The nature of everything.
prashad	Food offered to the gods and shared with the congregation.
punya	Actions that bear positive results and spiritually elevate a person.

Puja	Prayer/worship of the gods often in the form of murtis.
quality of life	The extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable.
Rajas	One of the three gunas representing activity and desire.
Ramayana	One of the two great epics of India that tells the story of Rama, the seventh avatar of Vishnu, and Sita, a princess and avatar of the goddess Lakshmi.
reincarnation	The rebirth of a soul/atman into a new body after death.
Sama Bhava	Often translated as ‘all religions are the same’. It is the Hindu view that all paths lead to the same destination.
samsara	The constant change or cycle of the world through a process of birth, death and being reborn through reincarnation.
sanctity of life	The belief that life is precious, or sacred because humans are made 'in God's image'. For many religious believers, only human life holds this special status.
Sanskrit	Language of the ancient scriptures.
Sarva Dharma	Often translated as ‘all religions are the same’. It is the Hindu view that all paths lead to the same destination.
Sattva	One of the three gunas representing purity and knowledge.
seva	Giving selfless service.
Surya Namaskar	Also known as the Sun Salutations. This is the sequence of 12 yoga poses that harmoniously blend physical postures, rhythmic breathing, and spiritual intent.
Tamas	One of the three gunas representing darkness and destruction.
Upanishads	The Hindu scriptures; final section of the Vedic scriptures.
vairagya	Detachment from personal wealth and possessions.
varna	The Hindu social classes, passed from one generation to the next: the divisions of Hindu society.
Varnashramadharma	The duties performed according to the system of the four varnas and four ashramas.
Vedas	The oldest of the Hindu scriptures that reveal knowledge.
Yajurveda	One of the four Vedas. It is written in prose and describes how to perform religious rituals and ceremonies.

Islam

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
akhirah	Islamic term for life after death.
Allah	Name for God in Islam.
amanah	A resource which God has entrusted humans to use wisely.
aql	The Islamic term for the human intellect or the rational faculty of the soul that connects humans to God.
darar	Minimising harm or suffering – usually in reference to the use of animals.
Day of Judgement (Akhirah)	The day after the world ends. When all humans will be judged by Allah.
ensoulment	The Islamic term for when they believe the soul enters the body; often accepted to be at 120 days.
euthanasia	From Greek, eu 'good' + thanatos 'death'. Sometimes referred to as 'mercy killing'. The act of killing or permitting the death of a person who is suffering from a serious illness.
fil ardh	The idea that Muslims are stewards of their environment.
fitrah	The Islamic concept of balance in the environment.
Hadith	Saying; report; account. The sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, as recounted by his household, descendants and companions. These are a major source of Islamic law.
halal	Any action or thing which is permitted or lawful, often used in reference to foods that are permitted.
israf	Islamic term meaning not to be wasteful or extravagance.
Jahannam	Concept of hell in Islam.
Jannah	Concept of paradise in Islam.
khalifah	Concept of stewardship in Islam; being a caretaker of the world for Allah.
khums	Shi'a concept of charity that originates from the time of Muhammad.
mizan	Islamic human responsibility to maintain the balance in the world.
Muhammad	The final prophet of Islam, to whom the Qur'an was revealed.
niyyah	The concept of intention in Islam.
People of the Book	A phrase used by Muslims to refer to followers of Christianity and Judaism with whom they share some religious beliefs.

quality of life	The extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable.
Qur'an	That which is read or recited. The divine book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Allah's final revelation to humankind.
riba	The belief that charging interest for loans is unjust and forbidden under Islamic law.
ruh	Idea of the soul in Islam.
sabr	Patience – the idea that Muslims are encouraged to endure suffering as a test from Allah which has a purpose.
sadaqah	Voluntary acts of charity through money, time or providing food to help the less fortunate.
sanctity of life	The belief that life is sacred and special because it was created by Allah.
Shahadah	Declaration of faith, which consists of the statement, 'There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'.
Shar'ia	Islamic law.
tawhid	'oneness' in reference to God and is the basic Muslim belief in the oneness of Allah.
zakah	Third pillar of Faith in Islam which means charity.

Judaism

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
bal tashchit	Do not destroy or waste items.
discrimination	Acts of treating groups of people, or individuals differently, based on prejudice.
dominion	To rule over or control something. For example, humans have control of the world.
euthanasia	From Greek, eu 'good' + thanatos 'death'. Sometimes referred to as 'mercy killing'. The act of killing or permitting the death of a person who is suffering from a serious illness.
free will	The ability to make choices (particularly moral choices) voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is predetermined.
holocaust	The term is often used to describe the Nazi genocide of over six million European Jews during the period 1941-1945. The term 'Shoah' (meaning 'catastrophe') is another phrase often used to describe this period.
kippah	A cap worn by Jewish boys and men (and sometimes women) during services. Some Jews wear a kippah at all times. It is a reminder of God's presence. A Kippah is often also known as a yarmulke.
ma'aser	Meaning 'tithe'. 10% of their annual income given to those in need.
nefesh	The Hebrew word, soul. It means 'breath'.
Pesach	Also called Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Festival commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, celebrated in the Spring.
Pikuach Nefesh	Saving of a life. It is the most important duty of a Jew.
pushke	A box in the home or synagogue used to collect money for the poor.
Rosh Hashanah	Jewish New Year.
Shabbat	Day of spiritual renewal and rest. Beginning at sunset on Friday and closing at nightfall on Saturday.
shechita	The method of killing an animal for it to be kosher.
Shomrei Adamah	Guardians/stewards of the earth.
Tikkun Olam	Repair the world.

Tu B'Shevat	New Year of the Trees.
Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayim	The prevention of any unnecessary pain or suffering to animals.
Tzedakah	Means justice or fairness and involves giving to charity.
Yetzer ha tov	Good inclinations.
Yetzer hara	Evil inclinations.

Sikhism

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
atma	The name given to the non-physical part of us (soul) that is believed to be immortal.
coercion	Persuading someone to do something through the use of threats or force.
daswandh	Donating 10% of income to those in need, the gurdwara or a nominated charity.
daya	Compassion.
euthanasia	From Greek, eu 'good' + thanatos 'death'. Sometimes referred to as 'mercy killing. The act of killing a person, either directly or indirectly, because a decision has been reached that death would be the best option.
gurmukh	Someone who has become God-centred rather than self-centred (manmukh).
Guru Granth Sahib	The sacred scripture of Sikhism that is regarded as the revealed Word of God.
haumai	The concept of being self-centred and acting through pride or ego.
hukam	The commanded will of God.
hymn	A religious song or poem praising God.
jhatka	A method of animal slaughter used in India, mainly by Sikhs.
karma	The belief that actions, and the consequences of these actions, determine whether the atma will be released from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. One could gain positive and/or negative karma.
kirpan	One of the five Ks worn by a member of the Khalsa. This is the dagger worn to symbolise defence against attack and the protection of those who are oppressed.
manmukh	Someone who is self-centred rather than God-centred (gurmukh).
miri-piri	The balance between religious teaching (spiritual matters) and practical situations (worldly matters).
mukti	Spiritual liberation from the cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth.
palliative care	Care provided to reduce the pain and suffering of terminally ill patients and make their end of life as comfortable as possible.

Rehat Maryada	The Sikh code of conduct followed predominantly by Sikhs who are initiated into the Khalsa.
reincarnation	The belief that the soul will be reborn into a new body after death.
sanctity of life	The belief that life is precious, or sacred because humans are made 'in God's image'. For many religious believers, only human life holds this special status.
santok	Contentment or satisfaction.
Sarbat da Bhala	Final statements of Ardas prayers asking for blessings for all.
Sewa/Seva	Service to fellow human beings; acts of kindness or charity.
Vand Chhako	To share what you have and consume as part of a community.
virtue	Behaviours considered to be morally acceptable.
Waheguru	The term used to refer to God; the Supreme Being. Literally means ‘wonderful teacher’ or ‘wonderful Guru’.

Non-religious perspectives

Term	Definition
abortion	When a pregnancy is ended by the deliberate removal of the foetus from the womb so that it does not result in the birth of a child.
conception	The moment when a sperm cell fertilises an egg cell, which marks the beginning of a new human life.
embryo	An embryo is the early stage of human development, from the moment of conception until approximately the eighth week of pregnancy, after which the developing baby is referred to as a foetus.
euthanasia	From the Greek meaning ‘good death’, it is sometimes called ‘mercy killing’. It means ending a person’s life in order to bring an end to their suffering, e.g. if they have a terminal illness.
free will	The ability to make choices (particularly moral choices) voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is pre-determined.
laudato si	An encyclical letter written by Pope Francis in 2015, addressing the care of creation, environmental stewardship, and the urgent need to combat climate change.
palliative care	Care provided to reduce the pain and suffering of terminally ill patients and make their end of life as comfortable as possible.
sustainability	Using natural resources in a way that can be sustained over a long period of time.