

Programme Specification

I. Programme Details

Programme title	Religions of Asia and Africa Religions of Asia and Africa & Intensive Language (any available)
Final award (<i>exit awards will be made as outlined in the Taught Degree Regulations</i>)	BA <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BSc <input type="checkbox"/> MSc <input type="checkbox"/> Other ... <input type="checkbox"/>
Mode of delivery	Distance-learning <input type="checkbox"/> On-campus <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Professional body accreditation (<i>if applicable</i>)	n/a
Academic year this specification was created	2016/17
Dates of any subsequent amendments	

II. Programme Aims: What will the programme allow you to achieve?

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advanced knowledge and understanding of selected approaches, methods and theories in the study of religions, with particular reference to the religious traditions of Asia and Africa. 2. Advanced skills in researching and writing about topics in religious studies, also as a platform for further research at doctoral level. 3. Advanced skills in presentation or communication of knowledge and understanding of topics in religious studies. 4. Specialisation in one area from among those covered by the units listed in the programme structure. 5. In the two-year pathway, the student will also be provided with a near proficient ability in a language.

III. Programme Learning Outcomes: What will you learn on the programme?

There are four key areas in which you will develop:

Learning Outcomes: Knowledge	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will learn how to assess data and evidence critically, locate and synthesise source materials, critically evaluate conflicting interpretations and sources, use research resources (library catalogues, journal databases, citation indices) and other relevant traditional sources. 2. Subject specific skills, such as manuscript transcription, textual bibliography, the editing of texts; familiarity with the study of religions as an academic field of study and its varieties. 3. Aspects of literature in the Study of Religions, philosophy, learning, iconography and history, the impact of religion on society. 4. Acquisition of language skills. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition through lectures and seminars. Students are required to attend all classes, study extensively on their own and prepare non-assessed work (for presentation at course seminars) regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be assessed by a variety of methods: long essays, seen or unseen examinations, group or individual presentations, coursework and a dissertation (the dissertation is a

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition through preparation of essays and dissertations. Acquisition through taking optional courses in the study of the religions of Asia or Africa. 	required method of assessment for the MA).
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Learning Outcomes: Intellectual (thinking) skills	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students should become precise and cautious in their assessment of evidence, and to understand through practice what documents can and cannot tell us. Students will develop the capacity to discuss theoretical and epistemological issues in an articulate, informed, and intellectual manner. Students will learn to become precise and critical in their assessment of scholarly arguments and to question interpretations, however authoritative, in order to reassess evidence for themselves. Students will learn to present complex theoretical arguments clearly and creatively. Those students who take a language option should be able to assess primary sources in foreign languages and critically evaluate interpretations proposed by different scholars. Students will acquire both theoretical and regional expertise in order to develop and apply self-reflexive approaches to the issues raised by the cross-cultural study of religions. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of all skills will be fostered directly through the programme's core options and indirectly through both the additional options, and supervision of the students' dissertations. The development of intellectual skills will be facilitated through lectures and seminars, and students' progress will be monitored through close assessment and supervision of coursework as well as through non-assessed seminar presentations. All courses will introduce information that will need to be assessed critically and will demonstrate how conflicting interpretations arise from the same information. By the acquisition of language skills, students will be enabled to assess primary sources in foreign languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The emphasis on assessed written work (by essay and examination) is in order to ensure advanced level training in skilled cognitive argumentation as a core contribution to preparation for further postgraduate study at the MPhil/PhD level.

Learning Outcomes: Subject-based practical skills	
<p>The programme aims to help students with the following practical skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Academic writing. IT-based information retrieval and processing. Presentational skills. Examination techniques. Independent study skills and research techniques. Reflexive learning. In the two year intensive language pathway, to acquire/develop skills in a language to Effective Operational Proficiency level, i.e., being able to communicate in written and spoken medium in a contemporary language. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of academic writing skills through the preparation of long essays and the dissertation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seen or unseen examinations, essays, group or individual presentations, dissertation.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of information retrieval skills through course teaching and training sessions offered by the Library and Information Services staff. • Acquisition of presentational skills through seminar and tutorial presentations. • Acquisition of examination techniques through training sessions offered by the Learning and Teaching Unit. • Acquisition of independent study skills and research techniques through supervised individual research and writing (dissertation and long essays). • Acquisition of reflexive learning through seminar discussion and supervised coursework. 	
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Learning Outcomes: Transferrable skills	
<p>The programme will encourage students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write concisely and with clarity. 2. Effectively structure and communicate ideas (oral and written). 3. Explore and assess a variety of sources for research purposes. 4. Work to deadlines and high academic standards. 5. Assess the validity and cogency of arguments. 6. Make judgements involving complex factors. 7. Develop self-reflexivity. 8. Develop an awareness of the ethical complexity of representational practices. 9. Question the nature of social and cultural constructs. 	
Typical Teaching Methods	Typical Assessment Methods
<p>Acquisition of transferable skills through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures • Regular monitoring and feedback on student progress during each stage of the programme's courses. • Substantial elements of independent learning, with feedback • Seminar discussion and individual supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through seen or unseen examinations, dissertation, long essays, individual or group presentations and course work.

General statement on contact hours – postgraduate programmes
<p>Masters programmes (with the exception of two-year full-time MAs) consist of 180 credits, made up of taught modules of 30 or 15 credits, taught over 10 or 20 weeks, and a dissertation of 60 credits. The programme structure shows which modules are compulsory and which optional. As a rough guide, 1 credit equals approximately 10 hours of work. Most of this will be independent study (see https://www.soas.ac.uk/admissions/ug/teaching/) such as reading and research, preparing coursework, revising for examinations and so on. Also included is class time, for example lectures, seminars and other classes. Some subjects may have more class time than others – a typical example of this are language acquisition modules.</p> <p>At SOAS, most postgraduate modules have a one-hour lecture and a one-hour seminar every week, but this does vary.</p> <p>More information can be found on individual module pages.</p>

MA Religions of Asia & Africa & Intensive Language (two years full-time)

Year 1	credits	60	+	60	+	45
	module title	Language Component		from list below Discipline Component		Study Abroad

Year 2	credits	30	+	30	+	30	60
	module title	Language Component		from list below or language module Discipline Component		from list below or from open options list Discipline Component	Dissertation

***List of modules (subject to availability)**

Dissertation modules:

Code	Title	Credits
15PSRC990	Dissertation in Buddhist Studies	60
15PSRC992	Dissertation in Gender Studies and Religion	60
15PSRC993	Dissertation in Indian Religions	60
15PSRC994	Dissertation in Japanese Religions	60
15PSRC991	Dissertation in the Christianities of Asia and Africa	60
15PSRC995	Dissertation in the Study of Islam	60
15PSRC999	Dissertation in the Study of Religions	60

List of taught modules:

Code	Title	Credits
Buddhism		
15PSRH008	Buddhism in Tibet	15
15PSRC172	Buddhist Meditation in India and Tibet	30
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PARH078	Imag(in)ing Buddhahood in South Asia (1)	15
15PSRH051	Imag(in)ing Buddhahood in South Asia (2)	15
15PSRC071	Religious Practice in Japan: Texts, Rituals and Believers	30
Chinese Religions		
15PSRH053	Chinese Buddhism in Pre-Modern Period	15
15PSRH038	Chinese Religious Texts: A Reading Seminar	15
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PSRH036	The Great Tradition of Taoism	15
Christianity		
15PSRH043	Colonialism and Christian Missions in Africa: Readings from the Archives	15
15PSRC055	Eastern and Orthodox Christianity	30
15PSRC175	Christians and Muslims in Syriac Texts	30
East Asian Religions		
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PSRC071	Religious Practice in Japan: Texts, Rituals and Believers	30
Gender and Religions		
15PSRH029	Judaism and Gender	15
Indian Religions		
15PSRC033	Avestan I	30
15PSRC173	The Origins and Development of Yoga in Ancient India	30
15PSRC052	Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives	15
Islam		
15PNMC228	Modern Trends in Islam	30
15PSRC158	Muslim Britain: Perspectives and Realities	30
Jainism		
15PSRH056	Jaina Philosophy in Comparative Perspective	15
15PSRH055	Readings in Jaina History and Culture	15
15PSAC309	Prakrit Language 1 (PG)	30
Japanese Religions		
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PSRC071	Religious Practice in Japan: Texts, Rituals and Believers	30
Judaism		
15PSRH027	Family, Work and Leisure in Ancient Judaism	15
15PSRH044	Jewishness on Screen	15
15PSRH029	Judaism and Gender	15
15PSRH030	Religion, Nationhood and Ethnicity in Judaism	15
15PSRH028	The Holocaust in Theology, Literature and Art	15
Multi-religious/comparative courses		
15PSRC162	Death and Religion	30
15PSRC164	Myth and Mythmaking	15
15PSRH049	Religions and Development	15
Religion in Africa		
15PSRH043	Colonialism and Christian Missions in Africa: Readings from the Archives	15
Theoretical Approaches		
15PSRC164	Myth and Mythmaking	30
Zoroastrianism		
15PSRC033	Avestan I	30
15PSRC034	Pahlavi Language	30
15PSRC052	Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives	30

Modules taught in other departments

15PANH055 Religions on the move: New Currents and Emerging Trends in Global Religion

15

Language modules:

[See pages in relevant departments.](#)

MA Religions of Asia & Africa & Intensive Language (four years part-time)

		Taught Component SOAS		Taught Component Abroad
Year 1	credits	60	+	45
	module title	Language Component		Study Abroad
Year 2	credits	30	+	30
	module title	Language Component		from list below Discipline Component
Year 3	credits	30	+	30
	module title	from list below Discipline Component		from list below or language module Discipline Component
Year 4	credits	30	+	60
	module title	from list below or from open options list Discipline Component		Dissertation Dissertation

***List of modules (subject to availability)**

Dissertation modules:

Code	Title	Credits
15PSRC990	Dissertation in Buddhist Studies	60
15PSRC992	Dissertation in Gender Studies and Religion	60
15PSRC993	Dissertation in Indian Religions	60
15PSRC994	Dissertation in Japanese Religions	60
15PSRC991	Dissertation in the Christianities of Asia and Africa	60
15PSRC995	Dissertation in the Study of Islam	60
15PSRC999	Dissertation in the Study of Religions	60

List of taught modules:

Code	Title	Credits
Buddhism		
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15PSRC172	Buddhist Meditation in India and Tibet	30
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PARH078	Imag(in)ing Buddhahood in South Asia (1)	15
15PSRH051	Imag(in)ing Buddhahood in South Asia (2)	15
15PSRC071	Religious Practice in Japan: Texts, Rituals and Believers	30
Chinese Religions		
15PSRH053	Chinese Buddhism in Pre-Modern Period	15
15PSRH038	Chinese Religious Texts: A Reading Seminar	15
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PSRH036	The Great Tradition of Taoism	15
Christianity		
15PSRH043	Colonialism and Christian Missions in Africa: Readings from the Archives	15
15PSRC055	Eastern and Orthodox Christianity	30
15PSRC175	Christians and Muslims in Syriac Texts	30
East Asian Religions		
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PSRC071	Religious Practice in Japan: Texts, Rituals and Believers	30
Gender and Religions		
15PSRH029	Judaism and Gender	15
Indian Religions		
15PSRC033	Avestan I	30
15PSRC173	The Origins and Development of Yoga in Ancient India	30
15PSRC052	Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives	
Islam		
15PNMC228	Modern Trends in Islam	30
15PSRC158	Muslim Britain: Perspectives and Realities	30
Jainism		
15PSRH056	Jaina Philosophy in Comparative Perspective	15
15PSRH055	Readings in Jaina History and Culture	15
15PSAC309	Prakrit Language 1 (PG)	30
Japanese Religions		
15PSRH018	East Asian Buddhist Thought	15
15PSRC071	Religious Practice in Japan: Texts, Rituals and Believers	30

Judaism		
15PSRH027	Family, Work and Leisure in Ancient Judaism	15
15PSRH044	Jewishness on Screen	15
15PSRH029	Judaism and Gender	15
15PSRH030	Religion, Nationhood and Ethnicity in Judaism	15
15PSRH028	The Holocaust in Theology, Literature and Art	15
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15PSRC162	Death and Religion	30
15PSRC164	Myth and Mythmaking	
15PSRH049	Religions and Development	15
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Theoretical Approaches		
15PSRC164	Myth and Mythmaking	
Zoroastrianism		
15PSRC033	Avestan I	30
15PSRC034	Pahlavi Language	30
15PSRC052	Zoroastrianism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives	
Modules taught in other departments		
15PANH055	Religions on the move: New Currents and Emerging Trends in Global Religion	15
Language modules:		
See pages in relevant departments.		