Tasmanian Certificate of Education

STUDIES OF RELIGION

Senior Secondary

Subject Code: REL315111

External Assessment

2012

Time: Three Hours

On the basis of your performance in this examination, the examiners will provide results on each of the following criteria taken from the syllabus statement:

Criterion 1  Structure and express relevant ideas and arguments clearly.
Criterion 2  Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts in Studies of Religion.
Criterion 3  Use credible evidence and reasoned argument.
Criterion 4  Analyse and evaluate the significance and implications of religious and/or secular viewpoints.
CANDIDATE INSTRUCTIONS

You MUST ensure that you have addressed ALL of the externally assessed criteria on this examination paper.

This paper has TWO sections.

You must complete FOUR essay answers in total - BOTH questions from Section A and TWO questions from Section B.

Answer each question in a separate booklet.

All questions are of equal weight.

All written responses must be in English.
Answer BOTH questions in this section.

Write each answer in a separate answer booklet.

This section assesses Criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4.

**Question 1 – Beliefs**

This cartoon below by Michael Leunig is a comment on the human condition. Drawing on one religious tradition you have studied, discuss the ways in which members of this tradition might respond to this cartoon, in the light of their core beliefs.

![Cartoon image]

**Question 2 – Aspects of Religion**

In this course the following aspects were available for study:

- structures
- sacred texts
- religious rituals
- practices and festivals
- lived traditions: a personal experience

Focussing on one aspect of a particular religious tradition, explain and evaluate the role this aspect plays in this religious tradition.
Section B

Answer any TWO questions from this section.

Write each answer in a separate answer booklet.

This section assesses Criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Question 3 - Significant Historical Challenge

Religious traditions are powerful agents for changing people or improving society. Discuss the response of a religious tradition to a significant historical challenge it has had to confront.

Question 4 – Significant Contemporary Challenge

‘Religious traditions which fail to live up to their own teachings do not deserve to be respected.’

With reference to a significant contemporary challenge to a religious tradition, show how the response of religious authorities has affected society’s views of the religious tradition and its leaders.

Question 5 – Founders, Fictions and Facts

Evaluate the extent to which modern critical scholarship has confirmed some aspects of the traditional understanding of the life and character of the founder of a religious tradition, while questioning other aspects of that understanding.

Question 6 – Non-Religious Worldviews

‘We can know nothing with certainty beyond this material world in which we live.’

Outline the attempts of Marxism, Secular Humanism or Secular Environmentalism to provide answers about the meaning and purpose of life. Evaluate these attempts.

Question 7 – Contemporary Atheism

Outline the two essential arguments of contemporary atheism:

• that religion is patently false and delusional
• that religion is in fact harmful.

To what extent can these views co-exist harmoniously, given the resurgence of religious belief and the rise of militant atheism?

Section B continues opposite.
Section B (continued)

Question 8 – How Do We Know what is Right? (Ethics and Morality)
Discuss the application of one ethical framework to a particular ethical issue. What tensions and conflicts are created?

Question 9 – How did the Universe Come into Being?
Outline modern scientific explanations of the origins of the Universe and the explanations offered by a religious tradition. Evaluate the evidence that scientists and theologians use to justify these explanations.

Question 10 – Why Do Humans Suffer?
‘To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemn’d alike to groan;
The tender for another’s pain,
Th’ unfeeling for his own.’
(Thomas Gray. Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College, verse 10, lines 1-4)
Discuss the existence of suffering and the possible reasons for its existence.

Question 11 – Do Human Beings Have a Soul?
‘Life is tragic simply because the earth turns and the sun inexorably rises and sets, and one day, for each of us, the sun will go down for the last, last time.’
(James Baldwin. The Fire Next Time)
Evaluate one theist and one non-theist response to this quotation.