basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS/ NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS

RELIGION STUDIES P1

MAY/JUNE 2026

MARKS: 150

TIME: 2 hours

This question paper consists of 11 pages.

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INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1. This question paper consists of SECTION A and SECTION B.

2. SECTION A: COMPULSORY
   SECTION B: Answer any TWO questions in this section.

3. Read ALL the questions carefully.

4. Start EACH question on a NEW page.

5. The length of your answers must be in accordance with the marks allocated to each question.

6. Number the answers correctly according to the numbering system used in this question paper.

7. Write neatly and legibly.

SECTION A (COMPULSORY)

QUESTION 1

1.1 Various options are provided as possible answers to the following questions. Choose the answer and write only the letter (A–D) next to the question numbers (1.1.1 to 1.1.10) in the ANSWER BOOK, e.g. 1.1.11 D.

1.1.1 The one who has achieved a compassionate mind is called a/the …

A bodhisattva.
B monk.
C Dalai Lama.
D Nirvana. (1)

1.1.2 In Taoism, if a priest studies for 20 years, he or she attains the rank of …

A Great Master.
B guru.
C caliph.
D pundit. (1)

1.1.3 This school of Buddhism is also known as the Greater Vehicle:

A Theravada
B Mahayana
C Tibetan
D Zen (1)

1.1.4 The Spanish Inquisition involved the following groups:

A Christians and Hindus
B Catholics and non-Catholics
C Buddhists and Christians
D Muslims and Hindus (1)

1.1.5 Which ONE of the following is NOT part of the five Pillars of Islam?

A Hajj
B Salaat
C Zakat (1)
D Hadith

1.1.6 The Pope who passed away in 2025 was …

A Pope John Paul II.
B Pope Benedict XVI.
C Pope Francis.
D Pope Gregory. (1)

1.1.7 uMvelinqangi in African Traditional Religion refers to …

A priests.
B God.
C Satan.
D Elders. (1)

1.1.8 The Dhammapada is the holy book of …

A Christianity.
B Judaism.
C Buddhism.
D Shintoism. (1)

1.1.9 This scholar of world religions initiated the Charter for Compassion:

A Karen Armstrong
B Karl Marx Ludwig
C Swami Vivekananda
D Sathyagraha (1)

1.1.10 Examples of syncretism:

A Hinduism and Buddhism
B African Initiated Churches and Sikhism
C Taoism and the Bahá'i faith
D Judaism and Christianity (1)

1.2 Complete the following sentences by filling in the missing word(s). Write only the word(s) next to the question numbers (1.2.1 to 1.2.6) in the ANSWER BOOK.

1.2.1 A spiritual teacher in Hinduism is known as … (1)

1.2.2 The concept that explains God in human form is known as … (1)

1.2.3 In African Traditional Religion, showing respect and empathy is called … (1)

1.2.4 The religious branch which was started by Martin Luther is known as … (1)

1.2.5 The world view that rejects religious belief, but places emphasis on human intellect is known as … (1)

1.2.6 A ceremony in Christianity in which water is used as a sign of purification and new life is called … (1)

1.3 Choose a term from COLUMN B that matches the description in COLUMN A. Write only the letter (A–H) next to the question numbers (1.3.1 to 1.3.6) in the ANSWER BOOK. DO NOT use any answer more than once.

COLUMN A		COLUMN B	
1.3.1	Veneration of the ancestors	A	atheism
1.3.2	Every action has a consequence	B	Trinity
1.3.3	A branch of Judaism	C	African Traditional Religion
1.3.4	God manifests as three persons	D	karma
1.3.5	Wide variety of spiritual exercises	E	Eastern Orthodox
1.3.6	Denial of the usefulness of religion	F	creed
		G	meditation
		H	orthodox

(6 x 1) (6)

1.4 Choose the word(s) in EACH list below that do(es) NOT match the rest. Write down the word(s) next to the question numbers (1.4.1 to 1.4.5) in the ANSWER BOOK and give a reason why the answer does NOT fit.

EXAMPLE: Red; Yellow; Circle; Blue
ANSWER: Circle
REASON: The other three are colours.

1.4.1 Ubuntu; Ancestors; Cremation; Modimo (2)

1.4.2 Brahma; Nirvana; Vishnu; Shiva (2)

1.4.3 Yahweh; Oludumare; Allah; Apocrypha (2)

1.4.4 Agnosticism; Materialism; Fundamentalism; Secular Humanism (2)

1.4.5 Abu Bakr; Ali; Allah; Muhammad (2)

1.5 Indicate whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. Write 'true' or 'false' next to the question numbers (1.5.1 to 1.5.5) in the ANSWER BOOK. Give a reason if the answer is FALSE.

1.5.1 A shaman is a Supreme Being in African Traditional Religion. (2)

1.5.2 The Eucharist is a ritual that is held in memory of the ancestors. (2)

1.5.3 Buddhahood is attained, it is not inborn. (2)

1.5.4 Hasidic Jews are open to the influence of modern life. (2)

1.5.5 The philosophy of Karl Marx forms part of the orthodox branch of Christianity. (2)

1.6 In the context of religion, write TWO sentences about EACH of the following:

1.6.1 Inspiration (2)

1.6.2 Teaching (2)

1.6.3 Pilgrimage (2)

1.6.4 Lao-tzu (2)

TOTAL SECTION A: 50

SECTION B

Answer any TWO questions in this section.

QUESTION 2

2.1 In the context of religion, give TWO facts aboout EACH of the following concepts:

2.1.1 Anatman (4)

2.1.2 Allegory (4)

2.1.3 Similarity (4)

2.2 State any TWO unique features of EACH of the following religions:

2.2.1 Buddhism (4)

2.2.2 Taoism (4)

2.2.3 Bahá'i faith (4)

2.3 State THREE differences between *Christianity* and *Judaism*. Tabulate your answer. (6)

2.4 Differentiate between the following terms:

2.4.1 Nirvana and karma (4)

2.4.2 Talmud and Hadith (4)

2.4.3 Myth and narrative (4)

2.5 Briefly discuss the teaching *communal way of life*, according to African Traditional Religion. (8)
[50]

QUESTION 3

3.1 Study the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITY

The concept of human rights has been in existence for centuries. Belief in the creation of humankind according to the image and likeness of God formed an integral part of the teachings of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Because people have been created in God's image (in other words, a human is a spiritual being), people should be given respect as God is given respect.

The need to establish an international agreement regarding human rights became urgent at the end of the Second World War. During this war, many people had inflicted harm on each other based on nationality, race, religion and gender. In order to prevent this from happening again, the United Nations (UN) wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This document listed basic human rights, and stated that all countries should acknowledge these rights.

Human rights, as defined by the South African Human Rights Commission, are the 'basic rights that everyone has simply because they are human'. These rights are listed in the Bill of Rights, which forms part of the South African Constitution. They belong to everyone, and all people therefore have the responsibility to respect each other's rights.

[Source: *Focus on Religion Studies Grade 12*]

3.1.1 What do you understand by the terms *human rights* and *responsibility*? (4)

3.1.2 According to the extract, what led to the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? (4)

3.1.3 Do you think the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is taken seriously in today's world? Give reasons for your answer. (6)

3.2 How is freedom of religion demonstrated in South Africa? (10)

3.3 List FOUR disadvantages of living in a society that promotes religious freedom. (8)

3.4 With reference to TWO religions that you have studied, discuss ONE teaching that promotes freedom of religion in EACH of them. (8)

3.5 In your opinion, what are the reasons for a lack of morality in modern society? (10)
[50]

QUESTION 4

4.1 Read the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Hamas* launched a deadly attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, in which they took hostages. This action prompted the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) to engage in aerial campaigns and ground operations within the Gaza** Strip. On 15 January 2025, the United States, Egypt and Qatar announced that they had mediated a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas to end 15 months of fighting in Gaza. Hamas released 33 of the remaining hostages, while Israel released hundreds of Palestinians from Israeli jails.

Displaced residents were allowed to return to northern Gaza, and 600 humanitarian-aid trucks were permitted to enter the territory each day. However, Israel launched a wave of strikes and ground operations in central and southern Gaza on 18 March 2025, bringing an end to the six-week cease-fire.

The conflict has escalated regional tensions across the Middle East. The IDF launched a ground invasion of Lebanon following months of cross-border skirmishers with Hezbollah***, which began striking northern Israel. Yemen's Houthi rebels have shot missiles at Israel and commercial ships in the Red Sea. Iran-backed groups also launched dozens of attacks on United States military positions in Iraq and Syria.

The Israeli cabinet formally declared war against Hamas, followed by a directive from the defence minister to the Israel Defences Forces to carry out a 'complete siege' of Gaza. It is the most significant escalation of the Israel-Palestinian conflict in several decades.

As of January 2025, 1,9 million Gazans – about 96 per cent of Gaza's population, have been displaced and categorised as facing acute or catastrophic food insecurity. There are currently no functioning hospitals in Gaza. The war has led to over 46 000 civilian Palestinian deaths. Israel has argued in many cases that its actions were necessary because Hamas' warfare tactics often had fighters embedding themselves in civilian areas.

*Hamas: the ruling political party in Gaza
**Gaza: Palestinian strip of land which was occupied by Israel in 1967
***Hezbollah: a Lebanese Shia-Islamist political party and paramilitary group

[Adapted from www.cfr.org]

4.1.1 What did Hamas do on 7 October 2023? (2)

4.1.2 Why do you think they did this? Give TWO possible reasons. (4)

4.1.3 Quote ONE sentence from the extract to show that this conflict did NOT start in 2023. (2)

4.1.4 How did the ceasefire of 15 January 2025 benefit EACH of the warring parties? (8)

4.1.5 Why did this conflict spread to other countries? (4)

4.1.6 To what extent is religion a part of this conflict? (6)

4.1.7 Do you agree with Israel's reason for the high number of civilian deaths among the Palestinian people? Give reasons for your answer. (8)

4.2 With reference to any TWO religions you have studied, discuss their teachings about conflict. (2 x 4) (8)

4.3 Suggest practical strategies that religious organisations can use to create a society free of religious conflict. (8)
[50]

QUESTION 5

5.1 Read the article below and answer the questions that follow.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY FACES CALL TO RESIGN

By CNN,12,2024

Archbishop Justin Webley of Canterbury, the most senior cleric in the Church of England, is under mounting pressure to resign after a damning report accused him of failing to take sufficient action against John Smyth, a sadistic child abuser.

A review of the church's handling of 'horrific' abuse perpetrated by John Smyth has put Archbishop Justin Webley's position in doubt after it was found that he 'held a personal and moral responsibility to pursue this case further' once aware of it, while a cover-up had been perpetrated by the church hierarchy who knew 'at the highest level, about the abuse'.

Now, three members of the Church of England's governing body, the General Synod, have started a petition calling for Webley to stand down immediately.

[Adapted from www.Anews.com.au]

5.1.1 What does the word *cleric,* mentioned in the article, mean? (2)

5.1.2 According to the extract, what actions are being demanded from the Archbishop of Canterbury? (4)

5.1.3 Refer to paragraph 2 and explain what is meant by *cover-up.* (4)

5.1.4 What do you think will be a fair punishment for John Smyth's action? (6)

5.1.5 List THREE negative consequences this article could have for the religious community. (6)

5.2 Outline any TWO aspects of religion that get the most media coverage. Give reasons for your answer. (8)

5.3 How should religious organisations respond to negative media publicity? (10)

5.4 Do you think that the South African media gives fair coverage of religious issues? Give reasons to support your answer. (10)
[50]

TOTAL SECTION B: 100
GRAND TOTAL: 150

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