**Kyle Hoad** - Wonderful, good afternoon, everyone. It's a pleasure to be with you here this afternoon. My name is Kyle Hoad. I am leading you through this implementation webinar, and I've had the great privilege of working with Leonie Brown, the Curriculum Coordinator on this implementation webinar for the 2023 and 2027 VCE Religion and Society Study Design. I'd like to begin first by acknowledging the traditional custodians and the traditional owners of the land on which we gather in lots of different places. For me, that's the Bunurong people, is the land on which I live and work, and we pay our respects to the ongoing living culture of the First People, their leaders past, present, and emerging.

This afternoon, if you are so interested, you can open up in your WebEx a Q&A panel and you can ask questions to the panellists. So, I will endeavour to answer the questions that I can in the time that we have today, but there's also a second session coming up next week where we might delay some bigger questions for that. If you do choose to ask a question, I encourage you to use All Panellists as a way to ask all panellists. And so, myself, as well as the other VCAA members present here could manage those questions on your behalf. In registering for this particular session, you may have found a link to a Qualtrics question and answer survey. We're going to take all of your questions from today and ones that have been sent to us ahead of time through the Qualtrics survey and put them into the second session which is next week to answer them in greater detail to give those answers the great time that they deserve and the fullest answer possible, instead of maybe giving them an answer on a fly.

So, there's two sessions to this implementation of the new Religion and Society Study Design. This is the first session today, which we are looking mostly at the study design itself. What the flavour of the study design is, the overall intention and some of the changes that experienced teachers might like to be aware of. And next week in session two, we're going to be looking at some of the teaching and learning activities for the newly developed advice for teachers that teachers may choose to use in developing a full and complete programme for religion and society. And we're also going to set aside questions from this afternoon's Q&A, but also the Qualtrics survey to answer in detail then. We'll be guided by the number of questions that you provide to us.

So, if there's lots of questions coming in over the Qualtrics survey the next few days, or even in the Q&A, then we will make sure that there's lots of time in it. If not, then we'll spend more time talking about teaching and learning activities. So, really my job this afternoon is to talk to you about the Religion and Society Study Design for 2023 to 2027, which is a fantastic study design, and talk about some of the general changes that we're going to experience, but also some of the very specific changes that experienced teachers might like to keep their eyes open for.

It's a great opportunity to have a look at your current curriculum and redevelop it if need be. There's opportunities for expansion of ideas, but there's also some opportunities to go even deeper on some of the key concepts. I really encourage you, if you haven't already done so, just to make sure you download a copy of the new study design. You can find it on the Religion and Society study page. It's not at the top of the page. It's actually the bottom of page so that we don't accidentally get confused about which is the current study design. The current study design will continue to run, but this is the new one. In particular on that new study design on page seven, there is a really great list of key aims for the entirety of the subject.

 And there's a fantastic explanation of what this subject is all about. It's all about helping students to understand the nature and purpose of spirituality. What is spirituality? What is religion? What are religious movements? And the second key aim in that list is one of my favourites, it's to understand and respect the spirituality and religious beliefs of others, to acknowledge their freedom and right to hold these beliefs. And by extension of that, to help our students in our schools to live in a society where different worldviews exist and how we can live in that space cooperating together. You know, the aims stated in the study design, talk about the nature and purpose of religion, but also importantly, about the interplay between society and the religion in the formation of individual identity, which is a really important part of what it means to be a religious person, what it means to be a person in society in which multiple world views coexist.

Students in this study are invited to reflect on the capacity of spiritualities and religions to make meaning in life for people, but also to look at the ways in which religions and society have an ongoing partnership and interaction with each other. And those key aims on page seven of the study design I think are a really fantastic place to start if you're looking at developing a curriculum in your school for the first time, or if you're looking at redeveloping your curriculum after a number of years of running a religion and society programme. That's the sort of general holistic view of religion and society. And I'm going to come back to that a few times to try and bring those ideas out for you over the course of each individual unit, as well as each individual area of study.

In particular, what I'd like to draw your attention to is the way in which the next accreditation period, '23 to '27, has been written to be inclusive of more traditions and more spiritualities. The new study design has been specifically written so as to be more accepting and open of all the different phenomena that lead to people having religious experience, or the totality of ideas that are encapsulated by the word religion. In addition to that, there's more emphasis on the expansion of context and interaction of that religious tradition or spirituality or denomination within our society.

Some key ones that I'll highlight a little bit later on are for example, in unit one, area of study three, where the study design encourages students to consider more the way in which religious traditions and spirituality have been key in the development of Australia's social infrastructure. In area of study three of unit two, the study design encourages students to consider both religious and outside of religious traditions, participants in our social debates on ethical issues to look at more than one side of the story and the way in which those two groups interact with each other.

And one other great area where the interaction with society comes out even stronger in this new study design is in unit four, area of study two, where students are encouraged to assess the influence of the way in which traditions have taken a stance or responded to a challenge, the way in which those actions have shifted, developed, changed the relationship between a religion and the society in which it exists. So, these are some of the specifics that I'll highlight as we go along. In terms of the units, the actual names of the units and the four units that are in the study design are retained from previous study designs.

So, unit one, unit two, unit three and four retain all their names. You know, in unit one, students are exploring the spiritual origins of religion and religious traditions and denominations, but also importantly, to understand the role of those religions and spiritualities in our society. Unit two, students have a great opportunity to explore the way in which religious traditions and spiritualities assist people in trying to make meaning out of the complex ethical situations of their life, moral decision making, essentially. They're exploring ethical issues in our society. And they look at a couple of different ways to address that from different religious traditions.

In unit three and four, which are typically they're the scored levels, unit three and four with the end of year examination, we retain our focus on individual religious traditions and denominations, although slightly expanded from the past, and in unit three, students are investigating and delving deeper into how those religious traditions and how those beliefs assist a person in making meaning in their life, whether that's in the big questions of their life or whether that's on the individual basis in terms of significant life experience.

And unit four, a great unit, which looks at the interaction of religion and society over time in a range of different contexts, and the way in which they have assisted each other in developing, or at times have been unable to assist each other in developing. There's some really key terms which I think are worth highlighting at the very beginning. Religion and religious tradition is one of those very important terms. It's in the name of study design. So, it's worth looking at. It's important to remember that whilst the study design does provide a definition for religion, a community organised around beliefs related to the ultimate reality and the consequent beliefs, principles, practises, and codes of behaviour, the term religion is also being looked at in a more holistic sense.

So, students in units one and two are going to be investigating religion in terms of the totality of phenomena that the term religion refers to, and the way in which those different spiritualities and denominations have contributed to our human society. In terms of religious tradition and denomination, denomination we might consider to be a named and well-defined subgroup in a religion that retains the fundamental and foundational beliefs of the tradition that it's part of but has different ways of living it out. They might have distinctive rituals, distinctive leadership structures, possibly even slightly varied, distinctive, or subsequent beliefs, but still maintains a core connection to their tradition.

Spirituality is included in all parts of unit one and unit two, and it allows for a greater expression of what it means to be religious. You know that sense of the totality of the phenomena which relates to religion is encapsulated also in the word spirituality. It's really a word that's being injected into the study design, I think to assist students to understand that not all experiences of the sacred or divine have to be formalised in terms of religious doctrine and religious leadership, but there can be a connectedness to that sacredness of divine without that formality. And one of the ways in which that's going to come out is also in the inclusion of lots of different First Nations spirituality as well.

A really important thing to notice is that the aspects of religion have been retained, and the aspects there you see listed on the screen and also found on page 10 of the study design, those are there to assist students in developing a framework for understanding religion, not necessarily as the only way to experience religion or spirituality. We know that religious traditions and spiritualities and denominations are varied in the ways in which they approach the world and also have developed over the course of history. And so, those nine aspects of religion are meant to assist students in finding a way to look at, investigate, and understand those religions, spiritualities, traditions, and denominations.

I encourage you to take some time to have a look at the command terms on the VCAA website. You can see a screenshot there on the right-hand side of the screen. Each VCE study, as well as the Victorian Curriculum from Foundation-10 is incorporating these command terms. And you can download a glossary of those command terms. And the intention of those is to be used in classrooms by teachers all the way across the whole Victorian Curriculum and VCE to help students better understand the requirements in terms of what they need to do in the context of their discipline. So, whilst two subjects might use the word analyse, what it means to them in the context of the study of religion and society might mean to look at the ways in which the beliefs of a tradition are helping people to understand or to make meaning of their lives. Some of the really great ones that you'll find in there that I think are very pertinent to religion and society include analyse, compare, contrast, discuss, evaluate, examine, explain.

And when you look through the 2023 to 2027 study design, you'll also see some of those changed command terms that you might be interested in. Okay, beginning with unit one, I'm going to slowly go through each of the units, unit one, two, three, and four and the areas of study and bring your attention to some of the great details that are in the new study design, as well as to draw your attention to a couple of things that might have changed since the last update to the study design. Unit one focuses on religion, that totality of phenomena, as we talked about that religion refers to.

And in particular, there's a broader inclusion and a broader understanding of what it means to be a religious person or to be a spiritual person. The study design includes five areas that groups religious traditions or spiritualities together. And those include the spiritualities of the First Nations people, spiritual and religious ideas in pre-history, religious traditions of ancient civilizations, Asian religious and philosophical traditions, as well as an Abrahamic traditions. And across the course of unit one and also unit two, students will be expected to investigate a range of different traditions and spiritualities from each of those five areas. In particular, in units one, area of study one and two, they'll be expected to delve deeper into something from each of those five categories.

So, really those five groups of spiritualities or traditions are meant to assist students in understanding what it means to be religious. What is a religion? What is a spirituality? And how they might have developed over time. By giving a group of five different categories that students should be investigating and a suggestion in the study design of some of those different groups that might fit that category, they're invited to take a deeper and broader look at the total experience of religion instead of just the formalised religion that they might normally expect to be considered in religion and society. Unit one, area of study one, students in this very formative area of study in unit one, they're introduced to the nature and purpose of religion in general.

So, students are invited to discuss, investigate, analyse, and evaluate the different ways in which people over the course of history have come to be religious or have come to be spiritual. You know, religion has often been drawn on over the course of history to help people to understand explanations for all phenomena, but also a way of coming to understand the big questions of life and helping to understand what is life and what is the purpose of our life. In this area of study, by looking across all five of those different individual groups that I mentioned previously, students get a greater appreciation of the ways in which religions over the course of history have tried to deal with these big questions of life and tried to create meaningful, people who participate in those religious or spiritualities in whatever way that that may be. What's a really important thing to note about unit one, area of study one is that students are going to be exposed to the aspects of religion for the first time in their study.

And so, a really good understanding of what those aspects are provides a basis for all of the areas of study across all four units. So, this may be the very first time they experience those aspects of religion. And so, it'd be a great opportunity to talk about the ways in which these religious traditions and spiritualities from the five groups experience those aspects, and the way in which they interact together. We're attempting to allow students to experience what it means to be religious, what it means to be spiritual in lots of different ways. And like the aims on page seven of studies and say, come to a greater respect or an appreciation for what it means to be religious, that totality of religious phenomena. It's important that in unit one, area of study one that schools ensure that students are exposed to one religious tradition or spirituality from each of the five groups.

So, they must approach each of those five groups. They must make sure that they have addressed something about each of those five groups, including all of the ones mentioned before. For example, First Nation spiritualities, spiritualities in pre-history, ancient civilization spiritualities and religious traditions, Asian spiritualities and philosophical traditions, as well as the Abrahamic traditions. It's very important that students get a full and complete broad picture of what it means to be religious, not just necessarily constrained to what they see in everyday life in Australia. Area of study two wants students to investigate and want schools to explore the way in which religious traditions and spiritualities have generated, changed, adapted, moved forward, or sometimes even stopped moving forward over the course of human history.

You know, the area of study does call it religion through the ages, but it also is about the spiritualities and denominations across the ages. Area of study two is an encouragement for students to understand and to really investigate the ways in which these ideas of being sacred or these ideas of being religious have changed over time, and the mechanisms by which those changes happen. Students are really encouraged to think about and also explore and investigate the ways in which these spiritual and religious ideas have passed from one generation to the next, especially through a process of socialisation. And one process of that socialisation is religious socialisation as well, being part of a community or being part of a spiritual tradition.

And on the screen at the bottom, you can see a series of words that go together there to just elucidate how a total view of the way in which religion is developing and transmitting its ideas should be investigated. So, moving from philosophical ideas to political ideas, the effects of changing landscapes in which traditions have been part of, colonisation, and in the modern world, also an increase in secularisation and a change in technology, and the ways in which religious traditions have managed to either go with the times or sometimes not go with the times.

And there's a couple of great words that you see there on screen which invite students to think about how religious traditions have been resilient in the face of these different contextual features, or sometimes how they have been unable to be resilient. And maybe a religious tradition has ceased to exist. And look at the reasons why. That development of religion over the course of human history is really in partnership with society. It's not something that happens in a vacuum, it's something that happens in the context of the society in which the religion is part of. And each of those context is very different.

Students are encouraged to consider reasons why some ideas from some spiritualities actually end up being part of other spiritualities or religious traditions. A real investigation into how some ideas maybe are passed on from one spirituality to the next, or indeed maybe absorbed from one religious tradition to another as those traditions move and change. So, an example of that adaptation or the changing might be the splitting of a tradition or a spirituality into more than one group. Unit one, area of study three is a real focus on what it means to be religious in our Australian context, particularly in the modern world, in modern Australian context, but also throughout the history of Australia, stretching all the way back to our First Nations people.

Unit one, area of study three really focuses on the interaction between spirituality and traditions and denominations in our Australian context, and the reasons why those interactions happen. So, students are, say for example, encouraged to discuss and evaluate the role of spirituality and traditions in Australian society, but also the way in which they provide social infrastructure in our Australian society. And that might include things like community groups, it might include things like identity-based groups, people coming together to form subgroups in our Australian society with shared beliefs or ideals, but also sometimes the physical social infrastructure of our society, that could include schools, that could include hospitals, that could include charity works.

One really fantastic feature of this area of study is a deliberate attempt to include interfaith and ecumenical interaction in Australia. And so, area of study three is really heavily favoured towards looking at the way in which those religious traditions and spiritualities from those five groups that were listed earlier are working together in our Australian society to bring about a greater experience sometimes, well, sometimes unable to bring about a greater experience of Australian society. Some of the things I'd like to draw attention to is the change in language in the new study design. So, the current study design favours the word interactions as opposed to the word tensions. And so, we encourage you to think about the way in which your students can look at both positive and negative interactions on religious traditions and spiritualities with each other, when have they worked together, and when have they been unable to work together?

In area of study three, there's an enhancement of the key skills as well, and students are encouraged to look at data and distribution on adherence to spiritualities and major religious traditions. And so, you will know that in 2021, we had another national census, and the results of that census are slowly coming out at a time. And so, it's a really great opportunity to look at the ways in which adherence to spiritualities or religious traditions have changed in Australia over time, but also to investigate the factors and the features that underpin those.

Unit two is all about religion and ethics. And this is a really fantastic unit in religion and society, and it's one that I know many schools in my talking to them have really enjoyed using at their schools. The core of this unit has remained the same over the course of the changes of study design. And it's really looking at the ways in which religious traditions assist their members, but also assist broader society in coming to moral decision making and moral judgement. It's important to note in unit two, that over the course of all three areas of study, students are invited to select at least two religious traditions or spiritualities and their related philosophical traditions to investigate.

Much like in unit one, unit two encourages students to look beyond just their maybe local sphere of religious experience, but to look at the ways in which other religious traditions and spirituality are approaching or addressing major ethical or moral issues in our society. In particular, features enhanced in unit two, religion and ethics, include a greater emphasis on the interaction of our traditions with the big events and the big ideas in our broader society. Three of those are listed on screen for you, but you can imagine a wide range of experiences, a wide range of influences that those traditions are having to manage, are having to negotiate with and having to interact with. It could include popular figures, it could include politicians, it could include other religious traditions as well.

And even though it's a study of religion and ethics, it really is a study of religion and ethics in a society in which they participate in. And all of those extra little things are going to have to be incorporated into your development of your curriculum, but also in the best interest of our students to not narrow them down to one way of thinking or to not keep them inside of one idea set, but to help them to understand the ways in which those religions do deal with society. And at times very differing priorities on what it means to be moral and what good decisions are. In area of study one, students are invited to investigate the processes by which people make moral decisions or make moral judgments.

And the image there, the diagram there on the right attempts to sort of bring together the idea that for each individual person, when they're presented with a situation in which they need to make a decision or they need to make a moral judgement, they're drawing into that decision, they're drawing into that judgement a range of different factors that are influencing them. They're drawing in authority figures, they're drawing in influences outside of their own families and own traditions in society, the movements in social trends that are maybe pushing or pulling them in different directions. They're drawing on the theories of ethics and the theory of moral decision making and trying to put it all together into one point of view, one way in which a person is able to make the best decision or the best judgement for themselves.

What I'd like you to note there on the left-hand side of the screen are those four different areas which the study design invites students to draw from when looking at systems of ethical decision making or systems of moral judgement. And so, an actual fact, one of those is brand new to the study design for this upcoming cycle. Virtue ethics is a new addition to that. So, there's four different types of ethical decision making that students are invited to have a look at and to investigate. In addition to that, there's also an expansion of the sources of ethical authority.

And in recognition of the different ways in which religious traditions base their source of ethical authority, there's some new language added into the study design, which I really encourage you to go have a look at, which includes things like divine command as a source of ethical authority. Really importantly, is the new additional factors that practical moral judgements are subject to based on influences from outside of a tradition or even inside a tradition. And so, in the past study design, there was an extensive list of those, and in the new study design for '23 to '27, that list returns, but with an increase in the number of different factors that students can investigate.

So, they might be investigating things like absolutism, they might be investigating things like divinity as a source of an additional factor or influence on ethical decision making, but now also mandates stakeholders circumstances as well, adding into that, giving you, the teacher, even more options for helping students to understand the lots of different things like that image is trying to suggest that go into the process of moral decision making.

In area of study two, we were looking heavily at the way in which religion itself tries to develop a sense of ethical rightness and good decision making. Most importantly in area of study two, looking at the way in which religion and ethics tries to bring together lots of different sources for the basis of their ethical decisions. In the past, beliefs and texts had been important sources for those ethical decisions. And you may think about the way in which the traditions that you have studied in the past like to use those beliefs and texts as a source of moral authority, but also now in the new study design, the way in which sacred stories have become informers of decision making. And I really think that's a great place to go to in terms of looking for the way in which religion tries to bring about an ethical society, but also ethical ideas. And I think it's a great expansion of the study design which is more inclusive like it was in unit one of the different total range of phenomena that are associated with religion and religious traditions.

By including sacred stories along the way as a source of ethical authority or a source of ethical decision making, or a source of ethical enlightenment, we can be more inclusive of the different ways in which people experience religion and spiritualities. And those that, like we were talking earlier, may not necessarily fit into the cut mould of the aspects of religion, remembering that the aspects of religion are meant to be a framework by which we assist students in understanding and investigating religious traditions, denominations, and spiritualities. In this unit, students are going to pick again from those list of five categories and look at the different ethical theories or different ethical ideas that exist inside that religious tradition, and to try and bring it out in a complete full way to see the ways in which those traditions try to bring about ethical lives and ethical moral and decisions.

Area of study three in unit two really is about the cornerstone between religion and society in possibly the most obvious way which we see it in a religious tradition and also in our Australian society. It's that intersection of religion and society in ethical issues that we currently face. In this particular area of study, students are expected to look into two ethical issues. And again, looking at lots of different ways in which traditions do that, but most notably, by looking at more than one religious tradition and the way in which they handle those ethical issues, and to balance up the different parts of that religion and also the different parts of our society, which tip the scales for a young person or an adult or anyone in our society who's trying to come to an understanding of right and wrong.

So, on the right-hand side of the image you see there, religion and society not in tension with each other necessarily, but in balance with each other and trying to weigh up the different components of that religion or different components of that society which shift the balance when it comes to ethical issues. For religion, that can be beliefs, it can be the aspects of religion, it can be a sense of passed on or generational authority like was talked about in some of the previous area of study. It could even be a sensitive divine law or divine command, but also the leadership of that religious tradition in assisting people in making moral decisions. But outside of our religion, we have society with its own values. And most importantly, that coexist in our society. And each of those world views has a perspective on an ethical issue, the two that you will choose to study in unit two, area of study three. They'll have their own perspective, but also leaders in our society who have their perspectives.

One particular important thing to note is an additional focus on participants in these debates. So, picking an ethical issue which is reasonably current would be wise, but also who are the leaders in our religious communities or spiritual communities, as well as leaders in society who are major players or participants in those debates, and the way in which they are influencing those debates. Students are required in this area of study to examine those ethical perspectives presented by particular people participating in those debates. So, that might mean religious leaders, but might also mean governments as well as government ministers.

That's sort of the holistic view of units one and two. And on page 19 of study design, there is a list of assessment tasks which are suitable for assessment in units one and units two, which I would encourage you to have a look at. And many of them are the same as previous study designs, but there are some new ones as well. For example, case studies, extended responses, multimedia presentations, structured questions, are all new to the study design. And hopefully, those changed assessment tasks might mean that it's more accessible for your students in the range of ways in which they experience the curriculum and the range of ways in which they learn and express themselves might be able to show you their satisfactory achievement of units one and two.

So, into unit three and unit four, these are year 12-based subjects, or these are the subjects with external assessment which contribute to a study score. And for some students, that may mean contributing to an ATAR. Unit three is the search for meaning. And it's all about finding and making meaning in life in lots of different ways. Unit three seeks to help students look at religious tradition and the way in which that religious tradition is helping an individual in that tradition to make meaning of their life on a large scale across the course of human history, but also on an individual scale when it comes to significant life experience. What's really important I think that you should note in this unit three, is that the range of religious traditions that you can select from has been expanded now to include Sikhism.

So, we have Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism as the six religious traditions and their denominations that you can choose for investigation. Importantly, along the course of the study design for '23 to '27, it is now one religious tradition or denomination that a school and a student will study in each area of study. The past language of one or more religious traditions or denominations has been removed now for one religious tradition or denominations. So, it's really important for some schools. They might need to go back and have a look at their curriculum materials and the particular religious tradition that they may choose to investigate. There was a term called truth narrative which is included now in unit three and unit four, helping students and helping schools to consider the totality of religious experience across the course of human history, and looking at the religious traditions and denominations in a broader sense, instead of keeping things too closely defined or too closely tied down. The concept of truth narrative, the way in which the tradition experiences and understands and conveys it's meaningful adherence across time and across history.

Unit one continues to be about responding to the social meaning. And it's really a way of helping students to understand and come to a sense of what it really means in life for life to have value, to have purpose, or to be worth living. The concept of the search of meaning is different for lots of different people, but in many ways, people are seeking out the same key ideas, something that brings value to their life, something that brings importance to life, and something that makes their life worth living for others as well as for themselves. Students in this area of study are invited to look at the nature and purpose of religion, but in particular, to consider the big questions of life. Who created me? Is there an ultimate reality? What should I do with my life? What does it mean to be a good person? Is there something after this death? Is there something after death? Is there an afterlife? How should I treat other people? How should I treat the natural world? If there is an ultimate reality, how can I be in a relationship with that ultimate reality? What does that relationship look like?

What's worth noting in this area of study is many of the key features in past areas of study and key language has been retained, but also a new focus on the big questions of life is being specifically noted in the key knowledge, and as another key reference to the purpose of belief in the key knowledge, which is worth looking at. I highly recommend that you go back to the study design and just double check that your current curriculum materials or your future curriculum materials are going to be covering all of those key knowledge points and the key skills points.

One thing I definitely want to highlight for you is that the concept of the interrelationship between aspects of religion is now covered across all three of the areas of study in unit three, and indeed the way in which they interact with each other in unit four is covered. So, unlike the past where the interaction or the interrelationship between the aspects was somewhat compartmentalised, the concept of religious tradition as a totality of the way in which adherence experience religion in their search for meaning has been broadened for unit three and is now included specifically in the key skills for area of study one. Area of study two is all about the way in which those beliefs, that traditions try to communicate to their adherence in area of study one, find their expression in normal life, but also in religious and sacred life. Importantly, schools must select two beliefs from area of study one. And what that means is that when they selected a single tradition or denomination in area of study one, they're going to need to retain that same tradition or denomination for area of study two.

So, they are unable to change those two because those beliefs come from that traditional denomination area of study one, they need to be carried forward in area of study two. One great thing about this area of study is that its intention is to support meaning in the life of an adherent, both in the religious life of that adherent, the sacred life of that adherent, as well as the broader life of that adherent. That diagram there on the right-hand side of the screen is meant to try and elucidate the idea that these beliefs form the centre of the religious identity or even personal identity of a person. But they branch that into all of the different aspects of religion, affecting the way that person lives their life.

For those who have used the previous study designs, you may remember the language of engender and nurture, and that language has been changed and softened to now talk about supporting meaning, which gives you a greater chance to explore what does it mean to support meaning in everyday life, but also in religious life. Sometimes the aspects of religion are simply there to assist a person in coming into a deeper relationship with their ultimate reality, or indeed to grow in their relationship with others.

Again, seeking to understand the big questions of life, how should I live my life? What does it mean to be a good person? And the changing of language to be supporting meaning, I think opens schools up to and students up to looking at the variety of ways in which the expression of these beliefs just helps to add that value, that importance to life outside of the possibly sometimes too academic or too linear way of thinking of the way in which beliefs are expressed and then "support meaning." It's a broader interpretation of supporting meaning. I think it's a really good way for you to open up to your students about the lots of different ways that people experience their beliefs, but also develop their beliefs. And again, the relationship of aspects spread across all of those areas of study those return in area of study two.

So, the way in which those texts might support those rituals, those rituals might support those spiritual experiences. And as a collective idea of aspects, the way in which they bring about greater meaning to a person in life. Unit three, area of study three continues to focus on significant life experiences and is a fantastic unit, sorry, fantastic area of study, that allows students to look at the ways in which religious traditions and beliefs help a person to make sense of the individual things that happen in their lives. So, in this area of study, schools and students are invited to select one individual from one religious tradition that they are studying, and to look at a significant experience from that person's life, to investigate what happens to that individual, their adherence to and understanding of their beliefs, but also, much like we've seen before, the way in which those beliefs might change in expression.

So, they may have in the past lived out very ritualistically, whereas now there might be moved to be a more spiritualistic approach, or they might move away from the formal religion towards the informal religion or going another direction. A person who has a significant experience who moves deeper into their adherence, deeper into their faith. What's important is that schools select a singular person from a religious tradition or denomination that is well studied in society, both in biographical and autobiographical materials. The study design quite clearly says that students have to draw on primary and secondary resources. So, selecting a figure who has written about their experience themselves, but has other people written about them will be very wise. The extent of that commentary on the person's change of beliefs should be relatively extensive. Really important to note that conversion experiences are not part of the study design.

So, the person studied must come from a religious tradition or denomination and remain in that religious tradition or denomination. And the image on the right-hand side of the screen there is meant to try and help understand that it's really about the interaction between these beliefs and the experiences over the course of that experience, which maybe shape and move them from one version of expression to another, or sometimes from a higher to a lower level. The assessment in unit three continues to contribute 25% to the study score. And each of the outcomes must be assessed by a minimum of one task.

What is important I think for teachers to note when developing their assessment materials is that the assessment tasks available, whilst very similar to what has been in the past, very specifically says that for each outcome, a different type of task must be selected from analytical exercises, case studies, essays, extended responses, structured questions, and visual analysis. So, when you're developing your assessment for 2023, you must make sure that each task is a different type of task from that list. Repeating the same type of task or repeating a set of structured questions across each of the three outcomes is no longer meeting the needs of the study design in terms of the assessment. So, it would be a really good idea to work with your teaching team in the coming few months if you continue on with unit three and unit four in the future, to consider the different ways in which you might choose to assess those.

One example for you might be case studies, could be a really fantastic opportunity to use a case study for the assessment of outcome three. You may choose to take, for example, some excerpts from a particular person's life, their significant experience, and make that as a stimulus material for students to analyse and to respond to in their assessment from outcome three as a case study which gives them an opportunity to really dig deeper into that person's experience and not so much remember the quotes and dates and facts and figures of that person, but to do more of the analysis on it. That's just one example.

Unit four continues to be about religion, challenge, and change. And it really focuses on the way in which religions have interacted with society over the course of human history in the lots of different ways in which they have been challenged, but also in the ways that those religious traditions themselves can prompt society to reconsider its position, to sometimes provoke society and sometimes cooperate with society. And that image on the right hand side there, every challenge that a religious tradition faces comes out of a history and a context, and it comes out of lots of different circumstances which we as educators are encouraging and inviting our students to consider when they're looking at those challenges that they face, the context, the beliefs, your own members of that tradition and members of society, and pulling it all together into what comes a situation that requires a tradition's action or a denomination's action.

Again, Sikhism has been included in unit four much in the same way that it was included in unit three. And in unit four, the school selects one religious traditional denomination as we did the same in area of study one and area of study two. Some of the things I'd like to draw your attention to is the way in which the study design encourages more consideration of the context in which these challenges come about. So, they use words like economic situations or political situations, and one particular brand new one is technological situations.

The way in which our developing society has changed might prompt new challenges for religious traditions because of those technological changes. Additionally, the study design also encourages schools to consider the reasons why traditions act. So, in the past, you may be familiar with the language of integrity, authenticity, and identity, but now some of the reasons to act could include the preservation or continuity of authority, as well as the preservation and continuity of adherence. So, there's five words in that sort of design to keep your eye out for; integrity, authenticity, authority, adherence, and identity as formulating reasons to act. Area of study one is, again, a continued study of a range of challenges over the course of time that a religious tradition has faced.

And I really encourage you to think about the way in which the study design is now encouraging students and schools to look at religion in a more total sense, to take an opportunity to think about the challenges that you might be selecting for unit four, area of study one, to get a broader encompassing of the religious tradition, and to try and see that tradition over the course of time in which contexts are different, in which maybe their authority or power structures are different, but also in the way in which those challenges have been different. Maybe you pick some challenges early in the tradition's life when they maybe are institutionally vulnerable, and some may be most recently when secularism might be an important factor to consider.

If you have taught unit four area of study before, you would be familiar with the number of challenges that were required. In 2023 to 2027, there are now three challenges required for study in area of study one. That means that you've got more opportunity to dig a little deeper into each of those challenges. Again, reflecting the overall intention of the study design to not leave everything on the surface, but to dig around a little bit more. The area of study one also encourages students to consider the reason why stances are adopted, and you might reflect on those key reasons to act like on the previous slide about authority and identity, but also for simply the preservation of that tradition. One thing that's brand new for this area of study is the comparison of sources of challenge.

So, it's important for students to look at where these challenges came from. And so, really carefully selecting the challenges that you'd like to use for your three challenges in area of study important, making sure that the sources of those challenges are significantly different, while still covering all three of those categories, theology, ethics, and continued existence. Whilst each challenge will probably cover all three of those areas in some way, it is likely that the challenges you select will heavily focus on one of those three, with a look at the other two categories as well along the way. Retaining authority is a really important part of a religious tradition's longevity and continuity. And so, the retention of authority comes into some of the reasons to act for religious traditions. What I'd like you to note for the key skills is that there is now more comparison of challenges in general. So, you could be looking at the ways in which these challenges have been different over the course of time, but also a real think about, and a real investigation into the ways in which challenges, generally for religious traditions, have been different over the course of time.

But also in the key skills is a new requirement for the examination of stances and really carefully understanding the basis of those stances. They might be rooted in the aspects of religion. So, they might be rooted in the belief of the tradition or the ethics of tradition, or even the leaders who have made the stances, but a real investigation for students and schools to dig deeper into the reasons why that tradition has held that perspective on that very particular issue. So, again, much like the other areas of study, trying to peel back a little bit in terms of the content. So, going from four to three, and giving schools more opportunity to dig a little deeper to get a bigger picture of religion and society as it interacts.

Area of study two is about the interaction of religion and society. And it is the area of study in which a school will select one very significant challenge that was faced by a religious tradition or denomination, most likely the same is in area of study one. Selecting one of those and going deeper into the process of ongoing interaction and engagement between that tradition and that society. The image on the right-hand side of the screen therefore tries to bring about or open up the idea that this challenges that a tradition faces, if they're really significant, are not single events in the course of history. You've got a situation that prompts a tradition to respond a challenge that the tradition takes note of, and they go through the process and the cycle of developing their stance, their perspective on that challenge, opening up their responses, looking at the effects of those responses, and hopefully, in this area of study, a look at how the actions that a tradition has taken may or may not have made the situation better or worse. And in turn, might have prolonged the challenge, made it harder to overcome, or made it easier to overcome.

This area of study really encourages and invites students to look at the ways in which a tradition acts. And then as a result of their action, has to re-evaluate their position or re-evaluate the way in which they wish to proceed in future. The key skills in this area have been significantly expanded, but I really encourage you to think about the challenge that you select for this area of study and making sure it's one that can demonstrate a continual interactive process of engagement and negotiation with the tradition's members, with society, and not be something that is too linear or to limiting. It's really important that the challenge selected in area of study two is different from the three selected area of study one. So, it should not be one taken out and studied in great detail. It has to be a different one.

So, at the end of the unit four, students will have studied four challenges in total. The key skills use some of those great command terms from the glossary which I talked about back at the start of the presentation. And they start to dig a little deeper into what's required for students. Words like analyse, examine, appear frequently in the key skills. And importantly, evaluating the influence of stances and supporting responses on the tradition, and whether or not the tradition achieved their outcome or their intended outcomes. So, students are invited to, and schools are invited to consider the ways in which traditions had formed their stance and responses, and then come to some kind of judgement, some evaluation on whether or not that really did what the tradition thought it was going to do. And one of the great reasons why that's important is to consider the way in which the tradition's actions have maybe prolonged the challenge, made it worse or made it better. And investigation of those intended outcomes is very good.

Finally, unit four, again, contributes 25% to the study score. And you've got two outcomes there for you on the screen. I'd like to draw your attention to the note that each outcome, a different type of task is selected from the following six tasks, much like in unit three. You can find those tasks on page 29 of the study design as well if you'd like. And in the upcoming advice for teachers which I hope will be published very soon, there is a couple of different, I think there's two or three different approaches to developing an assessment task that you might like to have a look at. Not 100% sure when that's being published, but I really hope it's soon 'cause I have seen it and I think it's going to be very valuable to schools. But again, picking two different tasks be very important.

Finally, just a reminder that at the end of unit four and the end of unit three, there is an overall assessment. We have school-based assessment or school-assessed coursework in unit three, which continues to contribute 25% to the study score. School-assessed coursework for unit four also contributes 25% to the study score. And your final end of year examination continues the final 50% to the study school. And you can find those numbers if you so choose in study design on page 24 and 29 respectively. I think I've managed to keep it more or less the time. I might have come in five minutes early, but I don't know if Leonie's caught any other questions in the Q&A that I haven't answered yet, but we might take some of those questions if we haven't had an answer to them and pop them in next week's one.

"Can a task type for SAC in year three be used in unit four or does every SAC need to be totally different?" No, you could use the same task type across the two units. You just couldn't use the same task type inside of an individual unit as well. And I think, Leonie, you might have caught all those. Have I missed anything, Leonie? I think I've got 'em all. No worries, I see one more one. I'm just going to try and tick these off as I go, another little one here for unit one and two assessment.

Do they have to come from a suitable task list? Yes, please. So, if I roll back here. Sorry for skimming through really quickly. So, the list of tasks which are suitable for assessment, you'll find on page 19. They try to be as broad as possible, giving schools lots of opportunities. Your assessment tasks there should be taken from those task types for units one and two. There we go, hopefully, I did that right. I think that might be it. I'm just going to tick these off.

Okay, well, again, if you've got any more questions that after reading the study design, you're still a little unsure about, we've got another session next week. And there's a link there on the screen. I might be able to type an answer in if someone asks me a question in the Q&A. I might be able to paste that into the Q&A for you to copy out, so you don't have to type that whole ugly HTML, one in there. So, I'd love for someone who ask me a question to please post the link in. I'll try and get that into the Q&A for you, but last one to put up there for you.

Thank you very much to Leonie Brown who is our curriculum manager for humanities, and Leonie's details there, he's been a great support along the way, and I really appreciate her encouragement and great assistance along the way. I think that's about it. So, I'd love to paste that link to the Qualtrics in there for you if you'd like. Maybe someone can just ask a question and I will answer it as much as I can. There we go, I managed to get it into the Q&A. So, you might be able to copy it out there. Thank you very much for coming, everyone.

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