



BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ASSESSMENT SYLLABUS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
CODE 31



2014

31
CODE

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FOREWORD

The Botswana Examinations Council is pleased to release the assessment syllabus for the revised Junior Secondary Education curriculum implemented in January 2010.

The purpose of this assessment syllabus is to guide schools, teachers and other educational institutions on what will be assessed in the subject area and how the assessment will be carried out for certification of students completing the Junior Secondary Education.

The curriculum at junior secondary level, puts emphasis on understanding and application of concepts; development of high order thinking skills (HOTS) such as inquiry, decision making, reasoning, creative, analytical, problem solving and process skills. It also calls for the acquisition of hands on experience that should increase the participation and performance of all groups e.g. groups of different abilities, learners with special needs, girls and boys.

All these skills entail more practical and challenging content and tasks that require higher levels of engagement of a learner's cognitive ability. The assessment syllabus has been designed to allow these higher order thinking skills to be assessed. It assesses what candidates know, understand and can do, enabling them to demonstrate their full potential.

The assessment syllabus is intended to promote a variety of styles of teaching, learning and assessment to enable candidates to progress to higher levels of learning. Therefore, teachers must be proficient in planning and directing a variety of learning activities. They should be conscious of the need for the students to be accountable and responsible for their own learning to some extent. They must also take into account the widening different levels of achievement which they aspire to. This implies active participation by both students and teachers, the creation of rich and diverse learning environments and the use of relevant assessment procedures to monitor the development of each learner.

It is important then that we value the student's own experiences, build upon what they know and reward them for positive achievement. This assessment syllabus is the outcome of a great deal of professional consultation and collaboration. On behalf of the Botswana Examinations Council, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the development and production of this assessment syllabus.



Executive Secretary

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1. Introduction

As part of the Botswana Junior Secondary Education Programme, this Religious Education syllabus is designed to provide a framework for the assessment of candidates who have completed the three-year course based on the revised Junior Secondary Religious Education teaching syllabus.

The Junior Secondary Education Religious Education Assessment Syllabus aims to afford the candidate an opportunity to fully demonstrate their potential and exhibit the knowledge and skills they possess through a variety of assessment modes. The syllabus also aims at providing information on what will be assessed and how it will be assessed with the intention of achieving comparable standards from year to year.

Candidates will be assessed on a scale of A – E. Candidates who fail to meet the minimum requirement will be awarded a U.

This syllabus should be read in conjunction with:

- (a) the Junior Secondary School Religious Education Teaching syllabus;
- (b) the specimen question papers and marking schemes.

This syllabus is available for private candidates.

The outcome of instruction in the content prescribed by the Religious Education teaching syllabus will be assessed through **two** written papers.

2. General Aims of Assessment

The syllabus embraces the subject aims defined in the Religious Education teaching syllabus.

The assessment syllabus has the following additional aims:

- To ensure proper assessment of all the important skills in the curriculum.
- To enable both teaching and assessment to cater for all ability levels.
- To provide an efficient evaluative mechanism of the curriculum.
- To encourage an investigative approach to learning.
- To provide internationally recognised standards.
- To enable the students to realise their full potential.
- To foster the development of the communication skills.
- To reinforce candidates' ability to handle and interact meaningfully with given materials.
- To encourage candidates to apply learned skills to manipulate life.

3. Assessment Objectives

For purposes of assessment, the behavioural outcomes of instruction in the prescribed content have been classified into three broad skill areas known as assessment objectives. Brief descriptions of the assessment objectives are given below.

Assessment Objective 1: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to recall and understand;

- 1.1 Religious Education facts and concepts;
- 1.2 the nature of religion and the impact it has on people's lives;
- 1.3 the nature of religion and its contribution in global issues;
- 1.4 the origin of religions and the stages of human development;
- 1.5 the role played by religious leaders in the establishment and spread of different religions.

Assessment Objective 2: Critical Thinking Skills

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to;

- 2.1 make a personal response to religious issues;
- 2.2 examine religious views on social and environmental issues;
- 2.3 evaluate different aspects of religions;
- 2.4 analyse the effects of religion on economic, social and political issues;
- 2.5 evaluate the place and significance of religion both historically and in the contemporary world.

Assessment Objective 3: Responsible Citizenship

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to;

- 3.1 apply religious knowledge to address social and moral issues;
- 3.2 co-exist with people from different religions (religious pluralism);
- 3.3 assess the importance of participating in activities at local, national and global levels;
- 3.4 demonstrate responsibility in evaluating issues of fairness, peace, social and religious practices.

4. Scheme of Assessment

The JCE Religious Education syllabus will be assessed through **two** written papers.

Paper 1		Multiple Choice Items	
Time	1 hour	Marks	40
Weighting	35%		

This will be a 40 item multiple-choice paper assessing candidate's understanding of Religious Education facts and concepts as well as the application of religious knowledge in addressing social and moral issues. Candidates will also be assessed on the ability to recall and understand how religion contributes to the shaping of global politics and economies as well as the environment. Each item will have four options.



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Paper 2

Structured and Essay Items

Time	2 hours	Marks	60
Weighting	65%		

This will be a written paper assessing knowledge, understanding and application of Religious Education concepts, as well as analysing and evaluating religious issues. There will be **two** sections in the paper, that is, Sections **A** and **B**.

Section A: This section will present **four** structured items of 10 marks each. Items in this section will assess candidates' understanding of challenges arising from certain belief systems; challenges facing different religions in the modern world; human relationships and the natural world. Candidates will also be required to apply religious knowledge to examine political, cultural, social and environmental issues. Candidates will answer all questions. This section will be worth **40 marks**.

Section B: This section will present **two** essay items of 10 marks each. Items in this section will assess candidates' ability to analyse and evaluate the role of religion in society; the value of religious pluralism and to assess the role played by religion towards achieving environmental sustainability. This section will be worth **20 marks**.



5. Assessment Grid

The grid below shows the assessment objectives that will be mainly assessed in each paper.

Assessment Objectives	Paper 1	Paper 2
1.1	✓	✓
1.2	✓	✓
1.3	✓	✓
1.4	✓	✓
1.5	✓	✓
2.1	✓	✓
2.2	✓	✓
2.3	✓	✓
2.4	-	✓
3.1	-	✓
3.2	-	✓
3.3	-	✓
3.4	-	✓

6. Grade Descriptors

The descriptions below provide a general indication of the skill acquisition expected of candidates for the award of key grades A, C and E.

Grade A

Candidates should be able to;

- demonstrate wide knowledge and clear understanding of religious terms, facts and concepts.
- show clear understanding of the challenges caused by and faced by religion in society.
- make thorough analysis and demonstrate extensive understanding of religious tolerance and its impact on life.
- Clearly show acceptable patterns of behaviour and values as expected in the society.
- Critically analyse how global issues influence the lives of people.

Grade C

Candidates should be able to;

- demonstrate fair knowledge and understanding of religious concepts.
- Demonstrate fair understanding of religious tolerance and its impact on life.
- Show fair understanding of the challenges caused and faced by religion in society.
- show acceptable patterns of behaviour and values as expected in the society.
- analyse how global and emerging issues influence the lives of people.



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Grade E

Candidates should be able to;

- demonstrate very weak knowledge and understanding of religious concepts.
- demonstrate limited understanding of religious tolerance.
- demonstrate limited knowledge of the challenges caused and faced by religion in society.
- demonstrate weak attempt to show acceptable patterns of behaviour and values as expected in the society.

7. Inclusive Assessment

BEC intends to ensure that all assessment is inclusive of all candidates regardless of their ability or challenges. This will afford all candidates the opportunity to display what they know without fear or prejudice. The assessment will therefore ensure that in the written papers items cater for all ability levels. Special needs candidates will be catered for through modification of assessments to suit visually challenged candidates, learners with hearing impairment as well as learners with learning disabilities. Candidates will also be accommodated as much as possible to gain access into the practically oriented syllabuses.

Centres are however requested to;

- inform BEC of any candidates who need special arrangements by March every year;
- ensure familiarity with the BEC special arrangements manual;
- make the necessary accommodations for learners with disabilities during the teaching and learning;
- modify learners assessments according to their various needs during the teaching and learning.

This will ensure that the special arrangements carried out by BEC do not come as a shock to candidates during examination time.



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