

Notes

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Religion and Society · SL

IB Religion and Society first assessment 2029; future course only

At least three religious traditions through change, identity, interpretation and power. Foundations distinguish contextual definitions, classification frameworks, and academic versus devotional approaches.

Future SL only: stimulus Paper 1 75 min 30%, Paper 2 90 min 40%, inquiry report 30%. First teaching 2027; do not advertise as the 2026 World Religions syllabus.

Part 1 · Definitions and frameworks of religion

Academic study examines evidence and interpretations; devotional approaches may seek understanding within a commitment to a tradition.

Classification frameworks simplify complex traditions and may impose categories that some adherents do not use.

Checked example

Test a belief-centred definition against examples of practice, community and experience in three selected traditions.

Explain which features it illuminates and which it misses before proposing a more careful working definition.

Limits and practice

This is the future 2029 course, not current World Religions renamed.

Avoid treating the familiar world-religions categories as neutral or universally accepted.

Why can a creator-belief definition be limited?

Answer: It can exclude traditions whose religious lives do not centre on a creator.

Part 2 · Change, identity, interpretation and power

Change includes responses to society and attempts to affect it; identity includes belonging within a community and relations with others.

Interpretation examines texts and the world; power examines authority within communities and relations with political powers.

Checked example

Compare how selected communities explain an adaptation, who interprets its meaning and who can approve it.

Link accounts to context and distinguish individual experience from official positions.

Limits and practice

A single example cannot provide the required coverage of three traditions through every theme.

School supplies verified cases and diverse sources; do not invent adherents' voices to complete a table.

Which question most directly examines power within a community?

Answer: Who has authority to approve the change and how that authority is justified.

Inquiry report · Conceptual inquiry and reflexivity

The future IA is an inquiry report about a group or individual adherents, using a concept to focus analysis.

Sources must support the inquiry; reflexivity explains how your position and access shape the interpretation.

Checked example

Compare public community sources, academic analysis and approved voluntary accounts. Distinguish what each can establish.

Revisit the question when evidence suggests important variation rather than concealing it.

Limits and practice

No invented fieldwork or compulsory devotional activity belongs in the task.

The 2029 full guide and final school requirements remain needed before certifying submission compliance.

What does reflexivity add to this inquiry?

Answer: An account of how the researcher's position and source access affect conclusions.