

Religion and ethics - common core subjects in Programme for general studies

Valid from 01.08.2006

Purpose

Religion and ethics is both a knowledge subject and a subject that aims to raise awareness and shape attitudes. The subject emphasises religious and philosophical traditions in Norwegian, European and international contexts.

Religious, ethical and philosophical questions are important for each individual, and for society as a whole, both as the basis for who we are and as a source of conflict. Mutual tolerance across the differences in religion and views on life is a necessity for peaceful co-existence in a multicultural and multi-religious society.

The subject shall contribute to knowledge on and respect for various religious, views on life and ethical standpoints in local, national and global perspectives. Education in the subject shall develop the theoretical and practical competence to analyse and compare religions, views on life and philosophical disciplines.

As a subject aiming to raise awareness and shape attitudes, religion and ethics shall also open for reflection on the pupil's own identity and own choices in life. The teaching in the subject shall stimulate each pupil to interpret life and attitudes.

Main subject areas

The subject has been structured into main subject areas for which competence aims have been formulated. These main subject areas supplement each other and must be considered together.

Religion and ethics has competence aims after Vg3 in the programme for general studies.

Overview of main subject areas:

Year	Main subject areas			
Vg3	Theory of religion and criticism of religion	Islam and an elective religion	Christianity	Philosophy, ethics and views on life/humanism

Theory of religion and criticism of religion

The main subject area *theory of religion and criticism of religion* focuses on the extent of religions and views on life globally, nationally and locally. The main subject area introduces analytical tools as the basis for a holistic and balanced understanding of religions. This main subject area also focuses on fundamental issues arising from the role of religions in society.

Islam and an elective religion

The main subject area *Islam and an elective religion* focuses on in-depth studies of Islam and another elective religion. Christianity can not be selected in this main subject area. Attention is paid to central features of the ethics of the religions, important texts from each of the religions, and different disciplines and aesthetic and ritual expressions in the religions. One important topic is the relation between the religions and other religions and views on life.

Christianity

The main subject area *Christianity* focuses on Christianity in all its varieties, nationally and globally, and in a historical and contemporary perspective. This main subject area focuses on important features of the ethics of Christianity, important texts from Christianity, and aesthetic and ritual expressions. Another important topic is the relation Christianity has to other religions and views on life.

Philosophy, ethics and views on life/humanism

The main subject area *philosophy, ethics and views on life/humanism* focuses on selected philosophers from a number of epochs and from several regions of the world. The main subject area also looks into ethical concepts and argumentation models, and forms the basis for making one's own opinions and choices. This main subject area focuses on humanism in a historical and contemporary perspective. Continuity and tensions within the humanism tradition are key elements.

Teaching hours

Teaching hours are given in 60-minute units:

Programmes for general studies

Vg3: 84 teaching hours

Basic skills

Basic skills are integrated in the competence aims where they contribute to development of the competence in the subject, while also being part of this competence. In religion and ethics the basic skills are understood as follows:

Being able to express oneself in writing in religion and ethics means being able to formulate knowledge and reflections so they become clear both to the pupil him-/herself and others.

Being able to express oneself orally in religion and ethics means being able to listen and formulate ideas in conversations and dialogues. This means that attitudes to ethical, philosophical and religious issues are tested and shaped in encounters with others. One key focus is being able to present material in a structured and accessible manner and being able to explain subject phenomena using relevant terms.

Being able to read in the subject of religion and ethics means being able to interpret and reflect on religions and philosophical texts and pictures. Reading also means understanding issues, uncovering arguments and identifying main points of view in different texts, and processing and assessing information.

Being able to do mathematics in religion and ethics means being able to use statistics, tables and other figures.

Being able to use digital tools in religion and ethics means being able to collect knowledge, process knowledge and present it. This also means being able to use sources with considered judgement and display ethical judgement when using digital tools.

Competence aims

Competence aims in the subject

Theory of religion and criticism of religion

The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to

- elaborate on the geographical and demographical extent of religions
- present main characteristics of the diversity of religions and views on life in local communities and the greater society in Norway, including religion and views on life in Sami communities
- discuss different definitions of religion
- present, discuss and elaborate on different dimensions of religions: theory, myths and narratives, rituals, experiences, ethics, social organisation, art and material expressions
- discuss and elaborate on different forms of searching for religions in our time
- elaborate on and assess different types of criticism on religions and views on life
- discuss and elaborate on cooperation and tensions between religions and views on life and reflect on the pluralist society as an ethical and philosophical challenge

Islam and an elective religion

The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to

- elaborate on key features in the religion and discuss and elaborate on important characteristics of the religion's ethics
- interpret some of the religion's key texts
- elaborate on different disciplines in the religion
- describe and analyse some aesthetic and ritual expressions in the religion
- discuss and elaborate on the religion's view on gender and gender roles
- discuss and elaborate on the religion's view on other religions and views on life
- compare the religion to other religions and views on life

Christianity

The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to

- elaborate on key features of Christianity
- describe and reflect on key features of Christian ethics
- interpret some important texts from the Bible and Christian tradition
- elaborate on examples of continuity and change in the history of Christianity in and outside Europe
- present two confessional forms of Christianity today
- describe and analyse some aesthetic and ritual expressions in Christianity
- discuss and elaborate on the views of Christianity on gender and gender roles
- discuss and elaborate on the views of Christianity on other religions and views on life
- compare Christianity with other religions and views on life

Philosophy, ethics and views on life/humanism

The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to

- present some key themes in European philosophical history from antiquity up to today
- elaborate on the main ideas of two European philosophers, one from antiquity and one from more recent times
- elaborate on the main ideas of one Chinese or Indian philosopher
- explain some key ethical concepts and argumentation models and recognise and assess different types of ethical thinking
- discuss and elaborate on ethical values and norms in connection with the culture and traditions of indigenous peoples
- conduct dialogues with others on relevant ethical questions
- elaborate on and discuss key characteristics and dimensions of humanism
- present main directions in Norwegian and international humanism from the 1930s up to our time and discuss similarities and differences between the various approaches
- discuss and elaborate on the views of some philosophers on gender and gender roles

Assessment

Provisions for final assessment:

Overall achievement grade

Year	Provision
Vg3 programmes for general studies	The pupils shall have one overall achievement grade.

Examination for pupils

Year	Provision
Vg3 programmes for general studies	The pupils may be selected for an oral examination. The oral examination is prepared and graded locally.

Examination for external candidates

Year	Provision
Vg3 programmes for general studies	External candidates must sit for an oral examination. The oral examination is prepared and graded locally.

The general provisions on assessment have been laid down in the Regulations relating to the Norwegian Education Act.