

MREL101 The Theoretical Approach of Religious Education

ECTS Value: 5 ECTS
Self-Study Hours: 85

Contact Hours: 25
Assessment Hours: 15

Overall Objectives and Outcomes

Religion always had a contemporary public and political life. The diversity in religions as found among mankind has been studied and examined in philosophy, theology, the natural sciences, the social sciences, psychology, phenomenology, politics and the arts. Here, plurality and diversity of religious traditions are taken into consideration and given full respect. Thus, Religion also be studied in a diachronic perspective, with a specific focus on Malta as compared to other relevant geographical areas.

By the end of this module, the learner will be able to:

Competences:

- a. demonstrate systematically an understanding and appreciation of the knowledge and concepts put forward and analysed in the literature presented;
- b. display critical awareness and understanding of the subject content and be able to relate it to one's situation and world view together with a pluralism of world views;
- c. assess critically and creatively theories surrounding RE pedagogies and initiate projects on the basis of this assessment;
- d. engage in action research to investigate the effectiveness of the various theories of teaching RE and the wide range of models of pedagogy and assessment in Religion.
- e. master his or her knowledge by delving deeper into a particular theoretical approach or a disciplinary position in order to be more focused in his or her studies. create meaningful learning experiences to prospective students to help them develop their cognitive and non-cognitive faculties, according to their own needs and perspectives.

Knowledge:

- a. appreciate and evaluate various RE pedagogies and modes of assessment in the Maltese context, and create resources accordingly to facilitate the learning process of prospective students;
- b. appreciate 21st century RE pedagogy aimed at equipping prospective students, to face the future and live within a socio-critical context both in Malta and abroad;
- c. evaluate critically the psychological, social, emotional, faith, moral and spiritual development of the human being so as to be in a better position to understand the complexity of the person in a holistic way in the RE classroom, with special reference to the Maltese classroom which provides participants (in this case being already teachers) with a challenging context;
- d. deal systematically and creatively with the theological and phenomenological methods in teaching RE, allowing space for philosophical reflection about truth and religion.

- e. Appreciate the knowledge shared about the different religious/spiritual positions explored here, even though the starting point of the programme is Christian.
- f. devise ways of using multiple intelligences and different learning styles in the RE classroom for effective teaching and learning of the subject;
- g. explore different summative and formative methods of assessment that allow prospective students to get engaged in their learning process.
- h. develop appropriate, knowledgeable and open possibilities for dialogue within the class, thus setting the floor for dialogue between different religious traditions or religious beliefs.

Skills:

- a. develop an inclusive and respectful attitude towards religious and spiritual diversity by adapting to the changing environments and thus managing diversity within the classroom,
- b. acknowledge moral development as aspects of human development in a challenging world, instigating in prospective students a drive to act according to conscience and integrate socially as true Christians
- c. analyse systematically the various methods through which Religion is taught, thus appreciating the theological, the philosophical and the phenomenological aspects being taught in RE as a means for analysing the Christian truths they promote and/or challenge;
- d. propose self-direction and originality to prospective RE students in a way to equip them to face new challenges, by showing critical thinking skills and application of knowledge;
- e. evaluate the different pedagogies used in RE with a view of making the subject an integral part of the lives of the students whom they will teach, thus being able to help students, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels to relate what they learn to their lives;
- f. analyse the suitability of various modes of summative and formative assessment to respective pedagogies employed.

Assessment Methods

This module will be assessed through: Assignment and Presentation

Suggested Readings

Core Reading List:

1. King, R. (n.d.). *Religion, theory, critique*. New York (N.Y.): Columbia university press
2. Barnes, L.P. ed., (2011). *Debates in religious education*. Routledge, pp.13-21, 52-61, 65-167, 258-267.
3. Barnes, L. P., & Wright, A. (2008). *Learning to teach religious education in the secondary school: a companion to school experience*. London [etc.], Routledge, pp. 7-38.
4. Black, P. and William, D., 2009. Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability (formerly: Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education)*, 21(1), pp.5-31.
5. Chater, M. and E. Clive. (2013). *Does Religious Education have a Future? Pedagogical and policy prospects*. Routledge, pp.11-25, 43-146.

6. Cotter, C. R., & Robertson, D. G. (2016). *After world religions: reconstructing religious studies*. London, Routledge - Taylor & Francis Group.
7. Seligman Adam B. (editor) (2014). *Religious Education and the Challenge of Pluralism*, Oxford University Press
8. Learning Outcomes Framework, (2015). *Religion*. [online] Available at: <http://www.schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt/en/dashboard> [Accessed 22 March 2018].
9. Ministry for Education and Employment. The Fronter Platform for Primary schools – Year 1 – Year 6. Available at: <https://ilearn.edu.mt/malta/main.phtml> [Accessed 22 March 2018]
10. Stern, J. (2006). *Teaching religious education: researchers in the classroom*. London, Continuum, pp. 39-149.
11. Stolberg, T., & Teece, G. (2011). *Teaching religion and science: effective pedagogy and practical approaches for RE teachers*. London, Routledge, pp. 13-53.

Supplementary Reading List:

1. Cavalletti, S., (2002). *The Religious Potential of the Child, 6 to 12 Years Old*. Liturgy Training Publications.
2. Davies, G. (2004). Religious Education in the Primary School. *School of Education*. [online] Bangor: University of Wales. Available at: <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/addysg/publications/Trafodion4s.pdf>. [Accessed 4 January 2018]
3. Duffy, E. (2012). *Catholic primary education*. Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Columba Press.
4. Fancourt, N. *Teaching about Christianity in religious education: a review of research*, [online] University of Oxford. Available at: <http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Teaching-about-Christianity-in-religious-education.pdf>. [Accessed 4 January 2018]
5. Fontana, D. (1995). *Psychology for Teachers*. 3rd ed. New York: Palgrave.
6. Harlen, W. (2014). *Assessment, standards and quality of Learning in Primary Education*. W. Harlen. York: Cambridge Primary Review Trust.
7. King, R. (2013). *Theory / Religion / Critique: Classic and Contemporary Approaches*. New York, Columbia Univ. Pr.
8. Moyles, J. R., Georgeson, J., & Payler, J. (2011). *Beginning teaching - beginning learning in early years and primary education*. Maidenhead, England, McGraw Hill/Open University Press. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=434992>.
9. Siraj, I., Taggart, B., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P. and Sylva, K. (2014). *Exploring Effective pedagogy in Primary Schools: Evidence from Research*. London: Pearson.
10. Stausberg, M., & Engler, S. (2014). *The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion*. London, Routledge.

Videos:

1. The Church of England. [2018]. *Curriculum Design in Religious Education*. [video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NTW2bsFTLY> [Accessed 8 September 2018].
2. The Woolf Institute. (2018). *RE-framing Education | The Woolf Institute*. [online] Available at: <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/re-framing-education> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2018].
3. Hand, M. (2012). *On Religious Education*. [video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPzCMJ_N4y8 [Accessed 4 January 2018].