

Essay 1: Answer ONE of the following (2500 words):

- 1. How rigid are the boundaries between Religious Studies and Theology? Should these boundaries be strengthened or relaxed? Your answer should demonstrate understanding of arguments on both sides of the issue.**
- 2. Is Religious Studies by definition a reductionist field of enquiry? Should it be? Support your argument by explaining which theoretical orientation(s) might most adequately address religion.**
- 3. Should Religious Studies scholars refrain from engaging with issues of religious 'truth' and leave that to the theologians? Conversely, should theologians engage with religions other than their own?**
- 4. Discuss the relative merits and demerits of 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives in the study of religions. Is a scholar from either perspective better qualified to study/interpret/explain religions?**

Essay 2: Answer ONE of the following (2500 words):

- 1. Choose one of the major disciplines relevant to Religious Studies (e.g. psychology, sociology, anthropology, archaeology, philosophy, cognitive science) and critically evaluate its contribution to the field, up to and including the present.**
- 2. What are the current trends in thinking on one of the issues raised in Section III of this module (e.g. 'comparison', 'gender', 'postmodernism', 'pluralism', 'secularization', 'religious experience', 'globalisation', 'fundamentalism', etc.). Are certain disciplines more relevant to understanding the issue than others?**
- 3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of studying religions using an interdisciplinary approach, as opposed to an approach from only a single discipline? Use examples.**