

RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT (CAPS)

Religion receives a very mixed but, on the whole, marginal treatment in the new curriculum proposals. In addition, there is little consistency and coherence in the way it is presented in the documents. The following table illustrates these observations.

PHASE	TREATMENT	TIME ALLOCATED
FOUNDATION (Gr R-3)	Religious days (festivals)	2 hours per term (Gr R-2) 3 hours per term (Gr 3)
INTERMEDIATE (Gr 4-6)	Places of worship & worship symbols Festivals & customs Dignity of the Person	6 hours – term 3 (Gr 4) 4½ hours – term 3 (Gr 5) 3 hours – term 2 (Gr 6)
SENIOR (Gr 7-9)	<i>Under the rubric 'Constitutional rights and responsibilities'</i> Oral traditions & scriptures Contributions to social development Contributions to peace	2 hours – term 4 (Gr 7) Part of 3 hours – term 4 (Gr 8) 1 hour – term 4 (Gr 9)
FET (Gr 10-12)	<i>Under the rubric 'Democracy and human rights'</i> Ethical traditions Various moral and spiritual issues	Part of 3 hours – term 4 (Gr 10) 3 hours – term 4 (Gr 11)

CONCLUSION

The proposed Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for Life Skills and Life Orientation are, in our opinion, no improvement on the RNCS (2002) which was consistent in its treatment of religion in Life Orientation, even though it was lacking in depth and appeal to the spiritual dimension of the human person.

The treatment of religion in the National Curriculum needs a clearly articulated rationale and coherent progression through the phases.

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