# REsilience

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# Self Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ)

## CONSOLIDATED RESPONSES

### SECTION 1
### KEY QUESTIONS AT THE HEART OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY

This section identifies some of the key questions that pupils need to engage with in preparation for understanding the complexity of religious and theological contentious issues.

RATE YOUR CONFIDENCE WHEN IT COMES TO ENGAGING STUDENTS WITH THESE QUESTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

|  |  | % |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 What do people mean when they refer to an issue as contentious or controversial? | Very confident | 30 |
|  | Confident | 59 |
|  | A bit confident | 12 |
|  | Not confident | 0 |
| 1.2 What is meant in religious contexts by terms such as fundamentalism, relativism, conservative, liberal, absolute, extremism etc? | Very confident | 19 |
|  | Confident | 31 |
|  | A bit confident | 45 |
|  | Not confident | 4 |
| 1.3 What are the differences between terms such as knowledge, belief, theory, opinion, proof, truth, evidence etc? | Very confident | 37 |
|  | Confident | 45 |
|  | A bit confident | 16 |
|  | Not confident | 0 |
| 1.4 Why do people have different beliefs – both in general and in their religions? | Very confident | 30 |
|  | Confident | 62 |
|  | A bit confident | 10 |
|  | Not confident | 0 |
| 1.5 Why do people have different interpretations of the same religion? | Very confident | 14 |
|  | Confident | 62 |
|  | A bit confident | 19 |
|  | Not confident | 4 |
| 1.6 Why are the consequences of faith not the same for all people who profess the same religion or tradition? | Very confident | 14 |
|  | Confident | 48 |
|  | A bit confident | 33 |
|  | Not confident | 4 |
| 1.7 How do different traditions find answers to ultimate questions and ethical issues? | Very confident | 21 |
|  | Confident | 49 |
|  | A bit confident | 27 |
|  | Not confident | 3 |
| 1.8 Some people talk about 'shared values' in the UK? Are there any shared values? Can people who do not share values live together in the same community? | Very confident | 11 |
|  | Confident | 52 |
|  | A bit confident | 33 |
|  | Not confident | 3 |

# SECTION 2
# TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

This section is about desirable attitudes and approaches for engaging with contentious religious and theological issues.

PLEASE PROVIDE A RESPONSE FOR **ALL** QUESTIONS

RATE HOW CONFIDENTLY YOU ADOPT THE ATTITUDES AND APPROACHES (LISTED BELOW) IN THE CLASSROOM

|  |  | % |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 Demonstrating respect for different cultures, religions and beliefs in your teaching | Very confident | 48 |
|  | Confident | 43 |
|  | A bit confident | 9 |
|  | Not confident | 1 |
| 2.2 Displaying appropriate sensitivity to the home backgrounds and the beliefs of the parents of pupils | Very confident | 40 |
|  | Confident | 40 |
|  | A bit confident | 19 |
|  | Not confident | 1 |
| 2.3 Ensuring that displays positively reflect the diverse society, languages and other aspects of the wider community | Very confident | 23 |
|  | Confident | 30 |
|  | A bit confident | 24 |
|  | Not confident | 12 |
| 2.4 Adopting an impartial stance while teaching | Very confident | 34 |
|  | Confident | 48 |
|  | A bit confident | 16 |
|  | Not confident | 1 |
| 2.5 Encouraging pupils to recognise the advantages of diversity within their communities as well as its challenges | Very confident | 26 |
|  | Confident | 47 |
|  | A bit confident | 19 |
|  | Not confident | 1 |
| 2.6 Providing opportunities to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping, in all its forms | Very confident | 36 |
|  | Confident | 27 |
|  | A bit confident | 27 |
|  | Not confident | 3 |
| 2.7 Encouraging pupils to express their ideas and beliefs in a sensitive and respectful way, even when they are negative or controversial; and understanding strategies for handling disagreements that arise | Very confident | 12 |
|  | Confident | 47 |
|  | A bit confident | 30 |
|  | Not confident | 3 |
| 2.8 Providing opportunities for students to develop the skills for discussion and balanced decision making | Very confident | 21 |
|  | Confident | 43 |
|  | A bit confident | 26 |
|  | Not confident | 1 |
| 2.9 Managing discussion effectively, especially when unplanned controversial issues arise | Very confident | 16 |
|  | Confident | 47 |
|  | A bit confident | 36 |
|  | Not confident | 1 |
| 2.10 Involving pupils in effective learning outside the classroom (eg through visits to places of worship, museums) | Very confident | 15 |
|  | Confident | 25 |
|  | A bit confident | 37 |
|  | Not confident | 22 |

| 2.11 Knowing where to find, and using effectively, up-to-date information and resources to support pupils' understanding of equality, diversity and community cohesion | Very confident | 8 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | Confident | 27 |
| | A bit confident | 52 |
| | Not confident | 12 |
| 2.12 Knowing how to find appropriate speakers with different beliefs and religious perspectives to talk to pupils | Very confident | 10 |
| | Confident | 16 |
| | A bit confident | 44 |
| | Not confident | 30 |
| 2.13 Knowing how to guide and help students to develop discernment when using the Internet, especially in relation to sites which promote hatred or violence | Very confident | 6 |
| | Confident | 29 |
| | A bit confident | 51 |
| | Not confident | 15 |

# SECTION 3
# MANAGEMENT ISSUES

These questions are about the collective skills and understanding of all teachers of RE in the school; not just about the work of the subject leader.

PLEASE PROVIDE A RESPONSE FOR **ALL** QUESTIONS

RATE HOW CONFIDENT YOU ARE THAT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE SCHOOL RELIABLY ...

| | | % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 uses effective strategies for teaching contentious issues | Very confident | 10 |
| | Confident | 34 |
| | A bit confident | 49 |
| | Not confident | 7 |
| 3.2 is based on sound knowledge about a range of religions | Very confident | 21 |
| | Confident | 47 |
| | A bit confident | 29 |
| | Not confident | 4 |
| 3.3 is effective in promoting equality and community cohesion | Very confident | 23 |
| | Confident | 41 |
| | A bit confident | 29 |
| | Not confident | 6 |
| 3.4 involves effective collaboration and communication with parents over the ethos of RE and the issues it raises | Very confident | 12 |
| | Confident | 19 |
| | A bit confident | 38 |
| | Not confident | 30 |
| 3.5 ensures that complaints or issues arising from RE lessons are handled fairly and effectively | Very confident | 29 |
| | Confident | 48 |
| | A bit confident | 18 |
| | Not confident | 7 |
| 3.6 has constructive links with: other schools; advisers; professional groups; the SACRE; local faith and belief communities - wider faith and belief communities | Very confident | 16 |
| | Confident | 29 |
| | A bit confident | 38 |
| | Not confident | 16 |

# SECTION 4
# CURRICULUM ISSUES

These questions relate to a selection (by no means a comprehensive list) of contentious issues that can provoke violent extremism. The question relates to confidence about addressing them from an RE perspective that takes full account of religious and theological motivation and arguments.

PLEASE PROVIDE A RESPONSE FOR ALL QUESTIONS

RATE HOW CONFIDENT YOU ARE IN TEACHING ABOUT ISSUES RELATED TO ...

|  |  | % |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 Religious extremism | Very confident | 6 |
|  | Confident | 27 |
|  | A bit confident | 51 |
|  | Not confident | 16 |
| 4.2 Terrorist organisations claiming religious authority, such as Al Qa'ida | Very confident | 4 |
|  | Confident | 14 |
|  | A bit confident | 55 |
|  | Not confident | 27 |
| 4.3 Situations in which religion is involved in contemporary conflict; especially Ireland and Israel/Palestine. | Very confident | 6 |
|  | Confident | 29 |
|  | A bit confident | 52 |
|  | Not confident | 14 |
| 4.4 Right-wing inspired race hatred, especially when given a religious justification | Very confident | 6 |
|  | Confident | 27 |
|  | A bit confident | 48 |
|  | Not confident | 18 |
| 4.5 Religious teachings about the use of violence and war; especially the 'just war' theory and interpretations of Jihad | Very confident | 23 |
|  | Confident | 41 |
|  | A bit confident | 32 |
|  | Not confident | 4 |
| 4.6 Religious teachings about homosexuality | Very confident | 20 |
|  | Confident | 38 |
|  | A bit confident | 24 |
|  | Not confident | 7 |
| 4.7 Issues of identity, religious/cultural traditions and belonging | Very confident | 21 |
|  | Confident | 45 |
|  | A bit confident | 33 |
|  | Not confident | 0 |
| 4.8 Social, cultural and political aspects of religion in the modern world | Very confident | 14 |
|  | Confident | 44 |
|  | A bit confident | 38 |
|  | Not confident | 4 |
| 4.9 Women and gender equality | Very confident | 32 |
|  | Confident | 47 |
|  | A bit confident | 22 |
|  | Not confident | 0 |

# SECTION 4
# ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. In response to the question 'in comparison with other CPD priorities for RE teaching, rate 'handling contentious issues high, medium or low', 44% responded 'high', 44% 'medium' and 12% 'low'.

2. When asked to identify other important 'contentious areas' not directly addressed in the SEQ, where knowledge and/or skills needed to improve, the responses fell into five main areas as follows:

   - *Diversity and identity* (both national and individual)
     immigrants and asylum seekers
     gypsies
     ageism
     disability

   - *Racism and 'phobia'*
     anti-semitism
     Islamophobia
     homophobia
     extremist parties (EDL, WDL)

   - *Families*
     monogamy/polygamy
     honour killing
     same sex marriage
     abortion
     arranged marriage

   - *Society*
     poverty
     crime and punishment
     drugs
     Shari'ah Law in Britain
     PC terms and use of appropriate language

   - *Religion and religious education*
     atheism vs theism
     science vs religion
     fundamentalism and its impact on studying other beliefs
     matters of life and death
     the need and justification for RE in schools
     teaching about a belief to students who hold it when the teacher him/herself does not

3. A range of the teaching issues mentioned by one or more respondent were:
   - assessment in RE
   - managing off-the-cuff discussions
   - engaging EAL students from different religious backgrounds
   - finding visiting speakers
   - finding teaching and learning resources to support non-specialist teachers of RE
   - building the subject knowledge of non-specialist teachers of RE
   - studying topics in context – not just focusing on religion
   - helping pupils with confused cultural identity
   - selection of websites
   - managing the attitudes of parents and the wider community
   - creativity and the use of thinking skills in RE
   - balancing political correctness with telling the truth

4. Almost without exception, the SEQ returns demonstrated that teachers were thinking openly and perceptively about how they might improve. My subjective impression is that the six most common and urgent areas of concern are:
   - explaining different religions, their varying interpretations and religious conflict
   - explaining the origins of modern terrorism and extremism and countering stereotyping
   - handling fundamentalism, biblical literalism and the intolerance of 'others' and 'other views'
   - getting students to listen to and engage with views they oppose and to manage their own discussions
   - subject knowledge for non-specialists
   - relationships with parents and the wider community (including other schools, SACREs, faith and belief groups, etc)