

Case study

Religion, Belief and Values Award — The Waid Academy



Background

In 2012/13, The Waid Academy offered the Award in Religion, Belief and Values at SCQF level 5. We viewed this as a trial year and delivered it to a small control group of three candidates who we knew would provide valuable feedback on their experiences.

Why did we choose the *Award in Religion, Belief and Values*?

In 2012/13 we chose to offer the Award on a trial basis as a way of looking at the practicalities that would be involved if we offered the Award to a whole year group the following year. We wanted to see how the students would respond to the Award and how they might approach it in terms of content and presentation of evidence. In this trial year the learners worked very independently with the support of the RME teacher.

We then used the evidence and the views of the learners who undertook the Award in the first year to decide if we would broaden out the Award to a whole year group.

The Award itself is an ideal way of helping to deliver the main aims and principles of RME within the Senior Phase beyond S3 and allows for progression in terms of learning and accreditation of a core subject. The structure and content of the Award also fits well with the aims and purpose of RME and what we would want our learners to experience as part of a coherent, meaningful learning experience.

Delivering and assessing the *Award in Religion, Belief and Values*

As mentioned, in the trial year we only ran the Award with a small control group. We then made a decision to broaden this out to the newly established S5 and S6 core RME classes that have started in 2013/14 in our school.

Our core RME classes in S5 and S6 allow for deep learning to take place on key current issues facing society, while at the same time allowing for personal reflection to take place. By building in opportunities to gather evidence that meet the requirements of the Award, we are allowing learners to gain accreditation for one of their core subjects in the Senior Phase and thus helping to reinforce the academic and challenging nature of this subject area.

Our S6 currently engage in a lot of charity work and volunteering in their Personal, Social and Health (PSHE) programme. By building on these prior and ongoing experiences, and allowing them to reflect on these from a religious or non-religious point of view, we can gather the evidence to meet the requirements of the *Religion*,

Belief and Values: Values in Action Unit. This was important to us in terms of making delivery of the Award manageable.

In terms of the experience of the learner, we are hoping that by allowing them the opportunity to reflect on what they will already be doing in PSHE — but from a very different point of view — we will help to deepen their understanding of what they are doing and also help them to develop their own beliefs and values.