STEFFI: Hello. I’m Stefanie Sinclair. I’m a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Religious Studies here at the Open University and I’m here with John Maiden who’s also a Senior Lecturer at the same department. And we’re here to talk about studying religious studies as part of the Arts and Humanities qualification.

John, can you quickly introduce what we’re actually doing in religious studies at the different levels of study?

JOHN MAIDEN: Yeah. You can do religious studies right the way through an Arts and Humanities qualification at the OU. At Level 1 you’ll find various units on fascinating topics that will give you an excellent grounding in religious studies as a really rich discipline. And you’ll begin to develop your knowledge and skills there also.

And at Level 2 we have a 60-point module called Exploring Religion where we really get to grips with looking at different religious traditions as they’re lived in everyday life. From the perspectives of place and of practice and of text and experience.

Then at Level 3 we have another 60-point module which is called Why is Religion Controversial where we look at the ways in which religions can be implicated in a whole range of global and national issues like violence, capitalism, multiculturalism and various other controversial areas.

STEFFI: You can study religious studies as part of the BA Honours in Arts and Humanities. That’s a qualification called R14 at the Open University. And you can take a specialist route in religious studies in this. R14 has both single and dual specialisms so you can combine religious studies also with other subject areas in this qualification.

You can also study various other qualifications and have an option for studying religious studies at Levels 2 and 3. And there are many combinations. For example, you could study a Level 3 of the religious studies module as part of your BA Honours in History or a Level 2 module as part of your BA Honours in Classical Studies.

And we recently became part of a qualification called R23 which is the BA Honours in Social Sciences. And of course you can study religious studies as part of the Open Degree.

John, would you like to say a little bit more about how religious studies complements other Arts and Humanities disciplines?

JOHN MAIDEN: Yeah. Religions are an important aspect of all human cultures past and present. And religious studies is not just about world views or internalised beliefs though we do look at belief very carefully. It’s also about great works of art, popular culture, national and international politics, public and private practices, the kind of everyday doing of religion.

So, whether you’re studying music or literature or philosophy or history, you name it, you’ll find that religious studies links really well with any other Arts and Humanities discipline.

JOHN MAIDEN: And also remember that religious studies uses a whole range of different approaches. For example, historical or textual and methods as well, qualitative, quantitative, engaging with a range of different types of sources. So, you’ll find in RS you develop skills that really complement and are relevant to other Arts and Humanities disciplines.