
GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES (SHORT COURSE) 8061/2

Section 2: Christianity

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject examiners. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all examiners participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each examiner analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright information

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © 2024 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Mark Schemes for GCSE Religious Studies

This paper requires expert markers who have wide knowledge and understanding of the particular subject content of the Specification. With the exception of the multiple-choice question, many of the questions asked have many different creditable answers and students are able to bring to their answers their own knowledge, understanding and background. They will offer details, arguments and evidence which the examiner, with the help of the mark scheme, will need to judge as creditable or not. It is therefore important that the examiner has a good understanding of the principles and spirit of the mark scheme in order to be fair and consistent when marking students' answers. The Content included is designed to be as helpful as possible but in many cases is not exhaustive. So Content sections are introduced by the sentence:

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

this is to remind examiners that there may well be additional correct answers which, with their expertise, they will be able to allow. With all questions if an examiner has any doubt about answers being creditworthy they should consult their team leader.

Structure

The mark scheme for each question shows:

- the question; Each question is printed in full before its target and mark scheme. It is always important that examiners remind themselves of the exact question being asked. In particular, they will need to do this in instances where the answer appears to be 'straying' from the question set or perhaps offers a valid alternative not included in the mark scheme
- target; The target provides the specific assessment objective which the question is testing. It reminds examiners of the skills the question is designed to test, eg knowledge and understanding, evaluation
- the total marks available for the question and if Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is assessed
- the typical answer(s) or content which are expected
- generic instructions related to the question target of how to award marks (ie levels of response grid).

Themes papers guidance (Specification A and Short Course)

In questions where students may choose religions from which to illustrate their answer, there may be some general Content, ie credible comments which students will make which could be applied to any religion or perhaps to a secular viewpoint as well. Where these are appropriate they are usually given first. The mark scheme will also include, under separate headings, Content sections for each of the six religions allowed within the Specifications.

General Guidance

.../.. means that these are acceptable alternative answers in the mark scheme, eg Guru Har Krishan / Guru Tegh Bahadur / Guru Gobind Singh.

Answers may include specialist terms, in Hebrew or Arabic for example. If this is the case, the mark scheme will usually indicate this by providing in brackets the English as well, eg 'Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)'. In such questions, answers will be credited whether provided in the original language or in English.

Some mark schemes use bullet points to separate content. Each bullet point refers to a different possible 'belief' or 'teaching' or 'way', depending on the question. Obliques (.../..) used within the bullet point indicate different ways in which the point may be expressed and points which may be made to give the further detail or development needed for the second mark.

Where a student has crossed out a complete answer, it should be marked if it remains legible, unless an alternative is provided in which case only the alternative should be marked. When part of an answer is crossed out, then only what remains should be considered.

In questions where credit can be given to the development of a point, those developments can take the form of:

- example or evidence
- reference to different views
- detailed information.

1-mark multiple-choice questions

Such questions have four alternatives and the one correct answer will be given together with the correct letter, eg 'Answer: D Trinity'.

2-mark short-answer questions

The principle here is provided in the mark scheme: 'One mark for each of two correct points.' Students may give **more than** the two answers required by the question. In such instances:

- **award for the first two answers only, wherever they appear**
- if a student gives more than one answer on the first line and another answer/other answers on the second line, the 'first two answers' will be the **first two** on the first line and **only these two** should be considered for marks. Other answers must be ignored
- if on the first line the first two answers given are correct, award two marks, regardless of what is written elsewhere in the answer
- if the first two answers can only be awarded one mark yet there is a third answer that is correct, this correct third answer must be ignored and no mark given for it
- however, if the student gives some **elaboration after the first answer**, which is clearly developing their first answer, (which they are not required to do), do not consider this elaboration to be their second answer (unless the elaboration happens to contain a second correct answer to the question asked), regardless of whether there are other answers provided. In this case, the second answer also, if correct, may be credited for the second mark.

4 and 5-mark answer questions

Examiners should take care to note the target of the question. Clear information is provided for these types of question on how to award marking points. Examiners should carefully read the additional instructions provided for each type of question (eg for influence questions the final sentence in the general guidance box reminds the examiner that the second mark (detailed explanation) awarded in each case must show clear 'influence').

12-mark answer questions

The 12-mark questions test Evaluation skills (AO2). The mark scheme for these answers is based on Levels of Response marking in which the examiner is required to make a judgement on the completed answer taken as a whole.

Level of response marking instructions

In GCSE Religious Studies, differentiation is largely achieved by outcome on the basis of students' responses. To facilitate this, level of response marking has been devised for many questions.

Level of response marking requires a quite different approach from the examiner than the traditional 'point for point' marking. It is essential that the **whole response is read** and then **allocated to the level** it best fits.

If a student demonstrates knowledge, understanding and/or evaluation at a certain level, he/she must be credited at that level. **Length** of response or **literary ability** should **not be confused with genuine religious studies skills**. For example, a short answer which shows a high level of conceptual ability must be credited at that level. (If there is a band of marks allocated to a level, discrimination should be made with reference to the development of the answer.)

Examiners should **refer to the stated assessment target** objective of a question (see mark scheme) when there is any doubt as to the relevance of a student's response.

Level of response mark schemes include either **examples** of possible students' responses or **material** which they might use. These are intended as a **guide** only. It is anticipated that students will produce a wide range of responses to each question.

It is a feature of levels of response mark schemes that examiners are prepared to reward fully responses which are obviously valid and of high ability but do not conform exactly to the requirements of a particular level. If examiners have any doubt about what level to award a response, they should consult their team leader.

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before examiners apply the mark scheme to a student's answer they should read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. They should then apply the mark scheme. It may be necessary to read the answer more than once to be sure of assigning the correct Level.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in 12-mark questions.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be assessed against the following criteria:

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
High performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with consistent accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. • Learners use a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.	3
Intermediate performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with considerable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall. • Learners use a good range of specialist terms as appropriate.	2
Threshold performance	• Learners spell and punctuate with reasonable accuracy. • Learners use rules of grammar with some control of meaning and any errors do not significantly hinder meaning overall. • Learners use a limited range of specialist terms as appropriate.	1
No marks awarded	• The learner writes nothing. • The learner's response does not relate to the question. • The learner's achievement in SPaG does not reach the threshold performance level, for example errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning.	0

0 1 . 1 Which one of the following is a means of salvation in Christianity?

[1 mark]

- A Ascension**
- B Grace**
- C Sin**
- D Trinity**

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

Answer: **B** Grace

0 1 . 2 Give two Christian beliefs about heaven.

[2 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

One mark for each of two correct points.

If students provide more than two responses only the first two responses should be considered for marking.

Students may include two of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

Where God is / when sins are forgiven, a soul can enter heaven / granted to those who have followed Christianity as a reward after they die (eg for following the 10 commandments) / may also be for those who have pleased God in following other faiths / God judges who goes to heaven / may be granted to all through God's grace because God is all loving / place of goodness, peace and joy / where there is no pain / opportunity to rejoin with family and friends / seen by many to be a spiritual state of being and not physical / eternal / opposite to Hell/ step after purgatory / traditionally pictured as being in the sky / angels are present / God sits on a throne, etc.

0 1 . 3

Explain two ways in which belief in the Oneness of God influences Christians today.

[4 marks]

Target: AO1:2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including influence on individuals, communities and societies

First way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 1 mark
Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate influence – 2 marks

To be a ‘detailed explanation’ the ‘influence’ of the way must be included.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- If there is only one God, he is the only God that Christians are influenced to worship and he can have their full faith and consideration. (build a relationship with God through prayer/ pilgrimage)
- Strengthens and confirms the idea of the Trinity as being parts or aspects of the one God so they are confident in including all three parts (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) in their worship.
- Monotheism helps them to understand the omnipotence, omniscience, omnibenevolence and omnipresence of God as he is the only God and so it influences them to follow the bible because of the power/love/presence of God.
- As there is only one God, they are influenced not to build up material ‘gods’ on earth such as great wealth, dependence on anything of the earth or other idols.
- Believing in the oneness of God makes this God supreme, / which may influence Christians to believe that other religions are false religions / can encourage Christians to do mission and evangelism to those who do not believe in the one Christian God
- Believing in the oneness of God may influence Christians to have good relationships with those of other faiths / knowing that others also believe in the oneness of God or of an Ultimate Being / encouraging this common belief and the sharing of values which come from it, etc.

0 1 . 4

Explain two reasons why Christians believe the Crucifixion of Jesus is important.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

First reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Second reason

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate reason – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to sacred writing or another source of Christian belief and teaching – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

- It was the end of Jesus' life on earth / and made the resurrection and ascension possible.
- It was the culmination of the rejection of Jesus / but allowed him to show that death is not the end.
- Jesus' crucifixion made up for the original sin / of Adam and Eve / and gives the possibility of eternal life / removed the barrier between humanity and God caused by sin.
- It taught Christians that sin can no longer destroy their lives / if they accept Jesus' sacrifice they can be sure that God will forgive them / if they faithfully ask for forgiveness / and repent.
- It enabled Jesus to experience pain and suffering / which makes it easier for Christians to accept suffering in their lives / because they know Jesus suffered and can understand and identify with their suffering.
- When crucified, Jesus took all the sins of humanity / and paid the debt for them all / atoning for all humanity / Jesus' sacrifice brought reconciliation with God for humanity / inspiring humanity to take the initiative in reconciliation with God.
- The word of the centurion 'Surely this man was the Son of God' confirms Jesus' divine nature / and gives Christians confidence that Jesus was the Son of God, etc.
- It opened heaven again for the souls of humans / having broken the barrier between them and God.
- It is a focal point of the Christian festival of Easter / all Christians commemorate the crucifixion/ they do this through the eucharist/ holy communion.

Sources of authority might include:

Attributed references to the story of the crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 27:32-56; Mark 14:21-41; Luke 23:26-49; John 19:17-37) "Forgive them father they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34) "When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." (John 19:30)

'Greater love has no one than this; that one lay down his life for his friends' (John 15:13)

‘For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord’ (Romans 6:23)

‘He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.’ (1 John 2:2)

‘The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin’ (1 John 1:7).

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given. Must give the source of the sacred writing or another source of Christian belief. (In the Bible, Jesus said ...)

0 1 . 5 'For Christians, it is right to believe that God is always loving.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

- refer to Christian teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[SPaG 3 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including significance and influence

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. References to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons/evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Atheist/ non-religious views are not credited.

Arguments in support

- The world and living creatures in the world, including humans were created by God out of love / and God wants the best for the world.
- Creation bestows God's love on the living things He created.
- Humans have the responsibility to love one another on the earth in the way God loves his creation / to follow God's example for the benefit of the earth / so it is right to believe that God is all loving in order to follow this instruction.

- Christians are told 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven...Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' (Matt 5:44&48).
- God's most loving act was sending his Son to die to atone for the sins of humanity / and open the way to the afterlife with God / 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life' (John 3:16) / this gift to humanity was given out of love.
- God's power is used only to do good / if God is not all loving, his power and authority are diminished and he may not be able to do all Christians believe he can do.
- God's perfect love extends to all who faithfully ask him for forgiveness regardless of what they have done / no-one is excluded from the possibility of God's love, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- Some find it difficult to understand how a God that is all loving can allow suffering and evil to exist / the existence of suffering and evil go against the idea of God being all loving.
- Natural suffering caused by God's creation of nature shows that God is not all loving / because the world he created out of love can be destructive.
- There are occasions, especially in the Old Testament where God does not appear to be all loving / eg the drowning of the Egyptian army during the Exodus, the destruction of Jericho.
- Even though Christians believe that God is the sum of all perfections / being all loving is impossible for humans to fully comprehend / so it is perhaps wrong to think of him as all loving.
- Although God may not directly cause injustices to happen, if he was all loving, he would prevent them / he chooses not to do this which is not an act of love, etc.