



GCSE MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2025

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES (ROUTE A) COMPONENT 3
OPTION 3 - ISLAM
C120U50-1**

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

EDUQAS GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES (ROUTE A) COMPONENT 3

OPTION 3 – ISLAM

SUMMER 2025 MARK SCHEME

General Marking Instructions for Examiners

The mark scheme defines what can be reasonably expected of a candidate in response to questions asked. Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must also be credited.

1. Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes that is accurate and relevant, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme. Errors should be ignored, not penalised.

2. Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor for the band provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains a range of marks.

3. Two-mark questions

Banded mark schemes are not suitable for low tariff questions. Instructions for the awarding of marks are given with the indicative content.

Using the banded mark scheme

Stage 1 – Deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance, if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content.

Stage 2 – Deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. It is extremely important to note that **indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a candidate need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.** Where a response is not creditworthy, i.e. that is contains nothing of any significance to the mark scheme, or is entirely irrelevant to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

Assessment Objectives

The questions test the candidate's ability to:

- AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief*, including:
 - belief, practices and sources of authority
 - influence on individuals, communities and societies
 - similarities and differences within and/or between religions and belief
- AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief*, including their significance and influence

* The term 'belief' includes religious and non-religious belief as appropriate to the subject content requirements.

Question (a)

See instructions provided with indicative content.

Question (b)

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark total
3	An excellent, coherent answer showing knowledge and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. An excellent understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses a range of religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority extensively, accurately and appropriately.	4–5
2	A good, generally accurate answer showing knowledge and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. A good understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses religious/specialist language and terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority generally accurately.	2–3
1	A limited statement of information about the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. A limited understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses religious/specialist language and terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority in a limited way.	1
0	No relevant information provided.	0

Question (c)

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark total
4	An excellent, highly detailed explanation showing knowledge and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. An excellent understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses a range of religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority extensively, accurately and appropriately.	7–8
3	A very good, detailed explanation showing knowledge and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. A very good understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses a range of religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority accurately and appropriately.	5–6
2	A good, generally accurate explanation showing some knowledge and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. A good understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority generally accurately.	3–4
1	A limited and/or poorly organised explanation showing limited knowledge and understanding of the religious idea, belief, practice, teaching or concept. A limited understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority in a limited way.	1–2
0	No relevant information provided.	0

Question (d)

Band	Band Descriptor	Mark total
5	An excellent, highly detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on detailed knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning to formulate judgements and present alternative or different viewpoints. An excellent understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses and interprets religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority extensively, accurately and appropriately.	13–15
4	A very good, detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning to formulate judgements and present alternative or different viewpoints. A very good understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses and interprets religious/specialist language, terms and sources of wisdom and authority appropriately and in detail.	10–12
3	A good, generally detailed analysis and evaluation of the issue based on a generally accurate knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning to formulate reasonable judgements and recognise alternative or different viewpoints. A good understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses and interprets some religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority.	7–9
2	Limited statement(s) of more than one viewpoint based on limited knowledge of religion, religious teaching and moral reasoning to formulate judgements. A limited understanding of how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Uses limited religious/specialist language and terms and/or few sources of wisdom and authority.	4–6
1	A poor, basic statement of a point of view and a very limited attempt or no attempt to formulate judgements or offer alternative or different viewpoints. Little or no attempt made to demonstrate how belief influences individuals, communities and societies. Poor use, or no use, of religious/specialist language, terms and/or sources of wisdom and authority.	1–3
0	No relevant point of view stated.	0

Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must also be credited.

For all (a) questions, credit 1 mark for a very simple definition or example and 2 marks for a developed definition with or without an example.

1. Beliefs and Teachings

(a) What do Muslims mean by 'tawhid'? AO1 [2]

- 'Oneness' in reference to God and is the basic Muslim belief in the oneness of Allah.

Refer to the marking bands for question (b).

(b) Describe Muslim beliefs about Jibril. AO1 [5]

- Jibril is the messenger from Allah to the prophets.
- Jibril revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad on the Night of Power.
- Jibril continued to visit Muhammad throughout his life.
- Jibril visited Maryam to tell her she would give birth to Isa.
- Jibril (with Mika'il) is said to have purified Muhammad's heart before the Night Journey.
- Some Muslims believe Jibril gave Ibrahim the black stone for the Ka'ba.

Refer to the marking bands for question (c).

(c) Explain Muslim beliefs about the nature and purpose of heaven. AO1 [8]

- Heaven (Jannah) is considered a paradise of eternal bliss and reward. It is viewed as a real, physical place where the righteous will dwell after death, granted by Allah as a reward for their faith, piety and good deeds.
- Some Muslims believe this cannot be changed, but some believe you can be in hell temporarily and then go to heaven.
- Some Muslims believe heaven is a physical place with gates mentioned in the Qur'an. The gates have specific names and purposes e.g. the Gate of Sadaqah (Baab As-Sadaqah) which is for those who gave frequently and generously to those less fortunate.
- The Qur'an describes paradise as a "great kingdom" (Qur'an 76:20) which spreads out over the whole world.
- There are different levels of heaven; the higher a person's faith and deeds, the higher their level in heaven will be.
- The purpose of heaven is as fulfilment of Allah's divine justice as the righteous are rewarded.
- Another purpose of heaven is for the believer to be closer to Allah and enjoy experiencing his presence.

Refer to the marking bands for question (d).

- (d) **‘For Muslims, all of the prophets in Islam are equally important.’**
Discuss this statement, showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.)
AO2 [15]

- All the prophets are chosen by Allah and therefore are all equal.
- Muhammad was the seal of the prophets, so he completed the message and no more prophets are needed after him, therefore he is the most important as he was last.
- Muhammad’s place in the Shahadah shows his significance in Islam.
- Muhammad also received the Qur’an, which is the only uncorrupted source of wisdom for Muslims. Muslims believe if one of the other holy books contradict what is in the Qur’an, the Qur’an is to be believed.
- Isa could be seen as the most important prophet. Isa is the son of Maryam, and his birth was a miracle as she was a virgin, which demonstrates Allah’s power. Allah also gave him other gifts.
- Isa’s near death was also a miracle as it appeared that he had been crucified but he did not die. Instead, he is taken to heaven with Allah where he remains today until returning on the Last Day.
- The Injil was written about the life of Isa and is mentioned 12 times in the Qur’an. Isa is mentioned 78 times.
- However, most Muslims do not believe the Injil was written at the time Isa was alive. Most Muslims also believe that it has been corrupted by humans.
- Adam was also a prophet and was formed by Allah from dirt collected by the angels. He is believed to be the father of the human race and represents diversity on earth. Adam was made as ‘khalifah’ to look after the world. Adam may be seen as most important as he was the first.
- Although Adam betrayed Allah, he confessed and became a prophet.
- Ibrahim was the first hanif, so was a monotheist in a time where lots of people were polytheists. He demonstrated his faith by agreeing to sacrifice his son so is a role model to Muslims today.

Where appropriate, relevant references are likely to include:

- *Qur’an 2:136 - Say, O believers, "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims in submission to Him."*
- *Qur’an 2:87 - Indeed, We gave Musa the Book, and after him We sent messengers, one following the other; and We gave clear signs to Isa, the son of Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary), and supported him with the Holy Spirit. Then, how is it that every time a prophet came to you with what does not meet your desires, you grew arrogant? So, you gave the lie to a group of the messengers and killed others.*
- *Qur’an 5:46 - We sent Isa, son of Maryam, confirming the Tawrat that had come before him, and We gave him the Injil, in which was guidance and light and confirmation of the Tawrat*

Please note: the mark scheme is not a checklist. Other valid points must also be credited.

For all (a) questions, credit 1 mark for a very simple definition or example and 2 marks for a developed definition with or without an example.

2. Practices

(a) What do Muslims mean by 'mosque'? AO1 [2]

- A 'place of prostration' for Muslims; it is a communal place of worship for a Muslim community.

Refer to the marking bands for question (b).

(b) Describe how fasting during Ramadan could be difficult for a Muslim in Britain. AO1 [5]

- Britain does not have an Islamic majority so most people will not be fasting.
- Restaurants and food shops will be open during Ramadan.
- British schools might discourage Muslim students fasting for Ramadan from taking part in sports events.
- As the Islamic calendar is lunar, Ramadan can be in the hottest times of the year.
- Muslims fasting in Britain will see other people eating.
- Some parts of Britain do not have big Muslim communities so they may not have a big celebration to break the fast.
- There is no alert for when the fast can be broken each evening.

Refer to the marking bands for question (c).

(c) Explain the importance of the Ten Obligatory Acts for Shi'a Muslims. AO1 [8]

- The acts are key religious duties that guide how a Muslim should live and practise their faith, reflecting devotion to Allah and striving for justice and morality.
- They ensure that a Muslim's life revolves around serving Allah and maintaining righteousness.
- They help preserve the identity of Shi'a Muslims, distinguishing them from other faiths and sects of Islam.
- Muslims may give to charities or volunteer to work with new Muslims to help them to learn about Islam and Allah's will in order to be good Muslims. This supports Zakat, Khums and teaches new Muslims about other Obligatory Acts.
- Muslims may become imams if they are considered to be role models for others and are selected by their community or religious authorities. Imams in turn teach about the Ten Obligatory Acts and help Muslims with this holistic approach to their lifestyle, religion and community.
- Following Amr-bil-Marooif and Nahi Anil Munkar, Muslims may get jobs in the prison system or volunteer with charities like Muslim Aid to help prisoners reform.
- Muslims may also give to charities as poverty can lead to criminal activity so helping make society fairer can mean people do not do bad deeds e.g. stealing in order to survive.

Refer to the marking bands for question (d).

- (d) **‘All Muslims, wherever they are, celebrate festivals in the same way.’**
Discuss this statement, showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer.)
AO2 [15]

- All Muslims celebrate Eid ul Fitr, the breaking of the fast, at the end of Ramadan.
- Most Muslims will start with special morning prayers, wash and wear new clothes, and celebrate with meals with friends and family. In most Islamic countries Eid ul Fitr is a national holiday.
- All Muslims celebrate Eid ul Adha at the same time, over a couple of days. Most Muslims will attend mosque and pray in commemoration of Ibrahim and his willingness to sacrifice his son.
- Eid ul Adha celebrations begin with an animal sacrifice shared with friends and family, and meat is shared with the poor.
- In Britain, a Qurbani payment is made to a charity to fund an animal sacrifice instead of British Muslims completing this practice themselves.
- Ashura is celebrated by all Muslims on the tenth day of Muharram but it may be celebrated differently.
- Sunni Muslims celebrate Ashura as the day Allah saved the Israelites from Egypt, led by Musa and the day Nuh (Noah) left the ark. They fast and pray in the mosque.
- Ashura is a day of mourning for Shia Muslims, commemorating the murder of Muhammad's grandson, Hussayn. In some countries (such as Iran), some men will whip themselves or cut their foreheads. However, many Shi'a leaders discourage this and encourage donating blood instead, showing all Muslims do not celebrate in the same way.
- Charity is a focus in all Muslim celebrations, as it is an obligation. However, how Muslims give to charity during festivals may not be the same.
- Many Muslims have individual or cultural traditions relating to celebrations so not all Muslims will celebrate in the same way.
- The Eid festival is not mentioned in the Qur'an so there is not a set way of celebrating it. In Britain, most Muslims will take the day off work or school but in communities with majority Muslims greater celebrations will take place.

Where appropriate, relevant references are likely to include:

- *Qur'an 3:92 - You will not attain righteousness till you spend in charity of the things you love.*
- *Qur'an 59:24 - He is the One God; the Creator, the Initiator, the Designer. To Him belong the most beautiful names. Glorifying Him is everything in the heavens and the earth. He is the Almighty, most wise.*