



GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES B 8063/2Y

Paper 2Y Perspectives on faith (Judaism)

Mark scheme

June 2025

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 teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates 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 associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate 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, associates 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

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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).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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Judaism: Beliefs

0	1	.	1
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Which one of the following is not one of the Ten Commandments given to Moses at Mount Sinai?**[1 mark]**

- A Honour your father and mother**
- B You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour (tell lies)**
- C Love your neighbour as you love yourself**
- D You shall not covet (be jealous of ...)**

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

Answer: C Love your neighbour as you love yourself

0	1	.	2
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Give two ways in which Jews have experienced the divine presence (the Shekhinah).**[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:

Pillar of cloud (Exodus) / pillar of fire (Exodus) / in the wilderness (Exodus) / in the tabernacle / in the Temple / in the synagogue (the Ark, the Ner Tamid) / in a minyan / when they study / pray / do good deeds / in times of need (in sickness), etc.

0 1 . 3 Explain two ways in which belief in the sanctity of life influences Jews in their daily lives.

[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:

- Life is a precious gift from God / Jews treasure it / are grateful to God for this gift / human life has a higher status than animal life, etc.
- They do not waste the gift of life / but treat their bodies with respect / avoid harming their bodies / with drugs, etc.
- They will not unlawfully shorten their own lives or those of others / by murder / suicide / euthanasia, etc.
- They seek to preserve the lives of others / the principle of Pikuach Nefesh / saving life takes precedence over most other Jewish laws / according to the Talmud, saving one life is like saving the entire world, etc.

0 1 . 4 Explain two Jewish beliefs about the nature of God as loving and merciful.

Refer to scripture or another source of Jewish 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 belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Second belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate belief – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to scripture or another source of Jewish belief and teaching – 1 mark

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

- ‘Steadfast love’ is used many times as a quality of God throughout the Jewish Scriptures / God’s love was shown in his provision of covering for Adam and Eve at the Fall when they felt shame at their nakedness / God’s election of Israel as his chosen people was based on his love for them, not because it was deserved / God provided for the needs of Israel in the wilderness, etc.
- God is aware of human weakness and is always willing to forgive / God is slow to anger / God is willing to forgive even deliberate sin, providing there is repentance, etc.

Sources of authority might include:

‘The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness ...’ (Exodus 34:6)

‘But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and you did not forsake them.’ (Nehemiah 9:17)

‘Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ...’ (Psalm 23:6)

‘Bless the Lord, O my soul ... who forgives all your iniquity ... who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy...’ (Psalm 103:2–4)

‘I am he who blots out your transgressions ...’ (Isaiah 43:25)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the beliefs given.

0 1 . 5

‘For Jews, it is more important to concentrate on this life than on what might happen after they die.’

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

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

[12 marks]

[Plus SPaG 3 marks]

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

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

Level	Performance descriptor	Marks awarded
High performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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

Arguments in support:

- There is no proof of life after death / science suggests that death is the end of a human's life and consciousness, etc.
- There is very little teaching in the Tenakh that reflects belief in an afterlife / it is not commanded as a belief in the mitzvot / there is a wide variety of Jewish beliefs leading to little unity / focus is on being part of the covenant and fulfilling the mitzvot.
- They should live in a way pleasing to God because it is the right thing to do, not because of how they might be judged after death / worrying about whether their lives will gain a favourable judgement can prevent people from fulfilling their potential and making the most of life, etc.
- If there is an afterlife, they can trust God to be merciful / Sheol is a temporary state, etc.

Arguments in support of other views:

- There are hints of belief in life after death in the Tenakh / Daniel 12 refers to resurrection and judgement with punishment for the wicked / references to Gehenna / the Mishnah teaches that there is a world to come (olam ha ba) / so the presence of such teachings means that it would be wise for Jews to keep the next life in mind when deciding how to live this life, etc.
- Wanting to receive a favourable judgement after death need not mean Jews cannot enjoy this life / it is all about having a balanced view between life now and the life to come, etc.
- God is a judge so how Jews live in this world does matter for the next / Jews will face judgement when they die / Rosh Hashanah encourages Jews to think about judgement and atone for sins / they don't know when they will be judged, etc.

0	2
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Judaism: Practices

0	2	.	1
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Which one of the following celebrates the Israelites' escape from slavery in Egypt?
[1 mark]

- A Pesach**
- B Rosh Hashanah**
- C Trefah**
- D Yom Kippur**

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

Answer: A Pesach

0	2	.	2
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Give two reasons why going to the synagogue is important for Jews.

[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:

Enables communal worship / for some prayers to be said, there has to be a minyan / they hear readings from the Torah and the prophets / they receive spiritual and moral guidance from the rabbi / key stages of life are celebrated in the synagogue / festival rituals foster devotion / education facilities / social / charitable function, etc.

0 2 . 3 Explain two contrasting Jewish views about the oral law (Talmud).

[4 marks]

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.

First contrasting view

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

Second contrasting view

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

Contrast may mean opposing or mean different views.

If similar views are given, only one of them may be credited up to 2 marks max.

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

- The Talmud was passed on for generations / finally written down as it had been given to Moses and became part of the Talmud, etc.
- Its authority is equal to that of the written Law (Torah) / the laws and interpretations are binding / and are to be obeyed / this is the view of many in Orthodox Judaism, etc.
- Rabbinic teaching that interprets and expands upon the Torah law / the laws etc were developed over time / provides guidance to respond to new situations (e.g. 39 melakhot), etc.
- Some of its laws etc. have value for Jews living in the world today / but they do not have to be followed to the letter / some of its requirements are no longer relevant / this is the view of many in progressive (Reform) Judaism, etc.

0 2 . 4

Explain two ways in which celebrating Shabbat at home is important for Jews.**Refer to scripture or another source of Jewish 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 way**

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate way – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate way – 2 marks

Second way

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate way – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate way – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to scripture or another source of Jewish belief and teaching – 1 mark

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

- The lighting of the candles at the start sets the day apart from other days and their secular concerns / lighting the candles is a reminder of God's first act of creation / encourages a sense of peace, holiness and an awareness of God's presence / the parents' blessing of the family encourages gratitude to God for his gift of children and family life, etc.
- The two Challah loaves are a reminder of God's provision of manna in the wilderness and double provision on the Sabbath / of his goodness / and his power to work miracles / the stories and songs remind Jews of God's saving acts, etc.
- The Havdalah rituals represent the continuation of Shabbat's peace and holiness into the coming week / gives Jews the assurance of God's help to face whatever will come / it is a means of 'keeping the Sabbath holy', etc.

Sources of authority might include:

'Keep the sabbath holy by doing no work.' (Exodus 20:8–10)

Reference to the 39 prohibitions or to examples of the work prohibited on Shabbat, eg making a fire. (Talmud)

'Shabbat is the day we stand still and let all our blessings catch up with us.' (Rabbi Lord Sacks)

'Shabbat is a time in which we celebrate family and children, the home, and just being together...' (Rabbi Lord Sacks)

Accept all other sources of authority that correctly support the ways given.

0 2 . 5 ‘Jewish marriage ceremonies are out of date for Jews in the modern world.’

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you should:

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

[12 marks]
[Plus SPaG 3 marks]

Target: AO2 Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their 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
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1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

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Threshold performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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

Arguments in support:

- The veiling of the bride by the groom reflects the story of Jacob being tricked by his father-in-law into marrying the wrong woman, etc.
- The Ketubah reflects the view that the man has to protect and provide for his bride, etc.
- The circling of the groom by the bride seven times symbolises that he is the centre of her world and she will protect him, etc.
- The smashing of the glass as a reminder of the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE which occurred a long time ago, etc.

Arguments in support of other views:

- Many ceremonies may be adapted / eg in some cases both men and women perform the actions that were traditionally performed by one / the bride may place a kippah on the groom's head / bride arrives veiled and is unveiled by the groom, etc.
- The Ketubah states the husband's responsibilities in the marriage and in the case of divorce, and so is an important and still relevant protection of the woman's rights within the Jewish community / adapted for modern views on divorce, etc.
- The use of rituals as a reminder of the past makes the couple aware of their cultural and religious heritage and reinforces their sense of being part of a community that will support them and to which they will contribute, etc.
- The smashing of the glass is seen as a reminder that marriage has hard as well as good times, etc.
- Chuppah is still used / the community can see and be part of the marriage ceremony, etc.
- Wedding rings are still exchanged in marriage ceremonies today / both bride and groom will wear them, etc.