



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 1061

RSS08 Religion and Contemporary Society

Mark Scheme

2009 examination - June series

This mark scheme uses the [new numbering system](#) which is being introduced for examinations from June 2010

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

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Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

Level	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic within the time available. Information is accurate and relevant, and good understanding is demonstrated through use of appropriate evidence / examples	28-30	A well-focused, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are clearly explained with supporting evidence and argument. There is some critical analysis. An appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument.	14-15	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility; high level of accuracy in spelling punctuation and grammar.
6	A fairly thorough treatment within the time available; information is mostly accurate and relevant. Understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate evidence / example(s)	24-27	A mostly relevant, reasoned response to the issues raised. Different views are explained with some supporting evidence and argument. There is some analysis. An evaluation is made which is consistent with some of the reasoning.	12-13	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, with some development, showing reasonable understanding through use of relevant evidence / example(s).	20-23	A partially successful attempt to sustain a reasoned argument. Some attempt at analysis or comment and recognition of more than one point of view. Ideas adequately explained.	10-11	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	A generally satisfactory treatment of the topic within the time available. Key ideas and facts are included, showing some understanding and coherence.	15-19	A limited attempt to sustain an argument, which may be one-sided or show little ability to see more than one point of view. Most ideas are explained.	7-9	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some clarity and coherence in organisation; there may be some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar adequate to convey meaning.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	5-6	
2	A superficial outline account, with little relevant material and slight signs of partial understanding, or an informed answer that misses the point of the question.	5-9	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	3-4	Little clarity and organisation; little appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar barely adequate to make meaning clear.
1	Isolated elements of partly accurate information little related to the question.	1-4	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-2	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

RSS08 Religion and Contemporary Society

01 Examine the relative strengths and distribution of the main religious groups to be found in the United Kingdom today.

Candidates should be able to outline the relative strengths of various religious groups, although detailed statistics are **not** required.

Most basic evidence would be that of 2001 census showing:

71%	Christian
2.7%	Muslim
1.0%	Hindu
0.5%	Jewish
0.3%	Buddhist
0.3%	Sikh

Within **Christianity**, may talk about decline in some of the mainstream denominations, including Catholics (though local examples may provide evidence of resurgence especially where there is significant Polish population), but growth, or at least maintenance of numbers among some evangelical groups.

Should give some attention to distribution,

Muslims well distributed but East London, Lancashire, West Yorkshire, Glasgow.

Hindus generally West London, West Yorkshire, etc.

Jewish populations traditionally in, e.g. London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Leeds, Cardiff, etc. with the Hasidic concentrations in Stamford Hill, Gateshead and North Manchester.

Buddhists different nature of populations. Not so associated with particular ethnic groups in all cases. Largest numbers in London.

Sikhs Southall and other parts of West London, as well as Leeds, Bristol, etc.

Candidates need to show awareness of the caution with which these figures can be used, especially in the case of Christianity, and should show some understanding of low levels of actual practice.

Strengths should refer to 'relative strengths' as in specification. Allow limited credit if this is taken as 'merits'.

Question asks for strengths and distribution, maximum Level 5 if only one of these dealt with, however well.

(30 marks) AO1

02 'Religion in the United Kingdom today is alive and well.'

Assess this claim.

Agree

Plenty of evidence of religion.
More evidence of public debate about religion – always in the news.
Matters of belief are part of public debate.
As are matters of practice.
Increasing diversity of religion.
Revitalised forms of religion, e.g. in Christianity.

Disagree

Evidence of decline.
Especially in Christianity.
In many other religions, concerns for the health of religion – especially in Judaism.
Concerns for loss of religious and cultural practice, e.g. among Sikhs.

Look for reasoned argument and debate – whichever stance is being taken.
May also talk about regional variations, as well as variations between the 4 nations of the UK.

(15 marks) AO2

03 Examine the role of faith schools within the United Kingdom today.

Answers would need some brief historical awareness of the nature of the 'dual system'. This could be tracked back to 1870, or certainly to the provisions of the 1944 Act. This allowed Voluntary Aided- and Voluntary Controlled schools (candidates would only be expected to understand the very broad distinctions between these). Provisions largely for Roman Catholic and Anglican, with a small number of Jewish Schools.

Now some 7,000 schools, and even with school closures a number of schools have recently become faith schools (largely Church of England). Recent application of the provisions, in their recent form, to allow for Muslim and Sikh schools.

Role of schools as having a distinctive ethos.
Allowing for admissions policy based on religious adherence and practice.
Distinctive religious teaching, and worship.
Selection of staff on faith grounds.
Criteria for appointment of staff.
Thus providing for an education within a faith environment.
Parental choice (if successful).
Extension of the faith community into the educational realm.

(30 marks) AO1

04 'Faith schools are inappropriate in the 21st century.'

Assess this view.

Inappropriate

They are seen as anachronistic.

Divisive.

How can we expect community harmony if children grow up being educated in separate communities?

Example of Northern Ireland system could be used to show the ways in which this increased separation between communities.

Appropriate

Parents want different things for their children.

If faith is important to them, then it is important that this is reflected for their children; bringing children up within the faith.

At a basic level, for instance, Islamic schools can provide single sex education for girls, which is not possible elsewhere within many Local Authorities.

Promoting an ethos and lifestyle in which the example of religion is found in all aspects of life e.g. the role of sewa in Sikh schools.

The role of prayer within many Catholic schools.

Although schools have to teach the National Curriculum, the content can be 'mediated' through a faith stance.

(15 marks) AO2

05 With reference to one or more religion(s), examine the difficulties faced by people trying to practise their religion in the United Kingdom today.

The Specification refers to facilities and times for worship, as well as dress and dietary rules, so these must be the main focus, although other relevant material may be considered.

Candidates may approach this thematically or by religion. It is not necessary for candidates to deal with more than two religions in their answer, although credit can be given for wider approaches.

Facilities

Places of worship may not be appropriately located, especially outside areas where there is any density of population from a particular faith group.

May be lack of prayer rooms, e.g. for Muslims, within a place of work, or those which have been set aside may not always be appropriately clean / undecorated. May also involve the lack of suitable washing facilities.

Times

Examples may include:

Difficulties for Christians in observing Sunday – because of working patterns – Sunday just another day.

Opportunities for Muslim prayer, recognitions of Friday jummah prayers.

Issues for Jews not only with Shabbat on Saturday, but also the ability to leave work / school early in the winter in order to be home in time for the start of Shabbat.

Times will include holidays and festivals of all religions. Even with Christianity, though Bank Holidays are loosely related to festivals, expectations that shops and public services will be available.

Even with equality laws, may make certain forms of employment more difficult.

Dress

Lack of understanding of obligations of dress, e.g. the hijab or the 5Ks.

Should be some awareness of practical issues and ways in which compromises have been reached. May cite issue of British Airways worker who was not allowed to wear a cross.

Answers may refer to relationship and distinction between culture and religion in respect of dress.

Diet

For many following religion requires adherence to dietary codes. Difficulties of finding halal / kosher food, especially if outside areas of Muslim / Jewish population, or difficulties for others if only Halal provided.

Diet may include times of fasting and lack of understanding of implications of this on the part of the wider community.

Attitudes of others

Examples of this may be included as long as it is made relevant to 'practising the religion'.

This may be answered in depth or breadth, but for higher level answers, there needs to be some range.

(30 marks)

AO1

06 'Only those with a strong faith can overcome the difficulties of practising religion today.'

Assess this claim.

Agree

It takes a high level of commitment to withstand difficulties.
Need for people to know why they're practising the religion.
Attitude of most of society is suspicious of / opposed to religion.
Takes commitment to fast when all around are eating or to go hungry rather than eat food which is not appropriate.

Examples cited in part (a) may be analysed to show where the level of faith comes in.

Disagree

Community solidarity can be a very powerful support, and this may be more powerful than personal faith.
Depends what is normative within a community.
Culture may be as important as religion.
Practice may be part of identity rather than only a matter of faith.
If brought up within a faith, this is what is done, and some may follow unquestioningly.

If faith shapes the whole of one's life, then these are not 'difficulties' – this point could be used on either side of the argument.

(15 marks) AO2

07 With reference to New Religious Movements, explain what is meant by 'millenarianism'.

Candidates most likely to refer to those with a background in Judaeo Christian tradition.
Background in apocalyptic.
Cataclysmic end and destruction of the world.
Belief in thousand-year direct rule of Christ.
And a golden age.
Based on a literalist reading of the Bible.
Belief in an elect – often a defined number.
Sometimes based on predestination.
Usually taking pessimistic view of humanity.
Often associated with 'world-rejecting' movements.

Rewards in the afterlife rather than in the present life.
Strong belief in some form of divine justice.
Variety of views and interpretations.

Some groups take less pessimistic view and see golden age as coming gradually rather than cataclysmically.

Examples may be drawn from a variety of sources including Adventists, Latter Day Saints and Jehovah's Witnesses. Branch Davidians, Supreme Truth Movement, and the People's Temple may also be cited.

(30 marks) AO1

08 'Millenarian movements will always be attractive to the deprived.'

Assess this claim.

Agree

Studies classically show attraction of these groups to those actually or relatively 'deprived'.

Relative deprivation theory makes sense in terms of deferred gratification.

Gives people a set of certainties when they may have few certainties in this life.

Gives people something to look forward to in the 'kingdom'.

Disagree

Deprivation can be addressed in many other ways, especially political movements.

There is need for people to have a particular religious framework of thinking if these movements are to have any attraction.

May argue that they had appeal in this way when religion was more dominant.

With the decline of religion they have less appeal in these circumstances.

(15 marks)

AO2