



**General Certificate of Education
June 2012**

Religious Studies

RSS08

Religion and Contemporary Society

AS Unit H

Final

Mark Scheme

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 students' 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 students' 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 A01	Marks	AS Descriptor A02	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in A01 and A02
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

Question 1 Changing patterns of religious practice in the UK during the 20th century

0	1	Examine the changing patterns of membership within Christianity in the UK during the 20th century.
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This may be approached in a variety of ways – including membership statistics and forms of membership

Membership statistics

Need to show awareness of the distinctions between attendance and membership. All denominations showing a pattern of decline, though some more drastically than others

Significant falls in Catholic Church, C of E, Methodist etc

No longer 'normative' that people grow up in a Church, go to Sunday School, get confirmed, stay in that Church, etc

But some rise in black-led Churches

And in some charismatic groups

Also Catholic Churches where there is a significant Polish population, as well as Orthodox where there have been significant movements from Eastern Europe

Forms of membership

Often freer and more ad hoc than they once were;

People may join at a variety of ages, rather than membership being part of growing up;

People may join particular groups – e.g. a house group, without taking on all the commitments of belonging to a particular church;

Role of activities like Alpha course groups, which may transcend traditional forms of belonging;

Sunday morning attendance may be difficult because of work commitments, leading to new forms of 'Church' – e.g. fresh expressions, cafe Churches etc. These may mean that people attend particular events, without full membership;

Attendance rather than membership,

Maybe 'pick and mix' approach - Membership may not be so denominationally 'tied' as it once was

Although statistics are a part of this answer, those which only deal with statistics can gain max L5. The idea of decline needs to be set in the context of broader changes.

(30 marks) AO1

0

2

'These changing patterns of membership are due to changes in society rather than to changes in belief.' Assess this claim.

Agree

In all sorts of aspects of life, there is less tendency towards 'joining' than there once was; people less willing to commit themselves long-term (cf parallels of marriage)
Pace of life and work patterns mean that for many, formal commitment to a particular group is less realistic than once it was, when membership might have involved not just Sunday services, but also weeknight meetings, etc
Family life has changed, and people's patterns of living do not fit in with traditional patterns of membership; changing models of 'family' mean that children may be in different places at the weekend.
People do not accept traditional authority in the same way as they used to;
'Believing without belonging' (Grace Davie)
Society more pluralistic – so 'pick and mix' approach

Disagree

Beliefs have changed-evidenced since 1960s at least
Much more questioning, scientific approaches and world view
Fewer people believe in God,
For those who still go to Church, the theology is usually very different from what it was in the past – more of a social gospel in many cases.

BUT – Some may point out that the fastest growing churches today are some of the most traditional, e.g. some of the Pentecostal Churches. This could be used on either side of the argument

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 2 Expressions of religion within society

0

3

Examine the authority of the various types of religious leaders today.

The focus is on authority, but students also need to look at types of leaders. This will determine what is said about authority. The question asks for various types of leaders, so some breadth is required.

Types of leaders:

E.g. Christian clergy, priests, ministers, etc. Rabbis
Hierarchical structures – e.g. episcopal
Particular offices such as archbishop, Chief Rabbi etc
Leadership through scholarship/expertise, e.g. rabbis, imams

Leadership through committee/council structures: e.g. Church councils, Gurdwara committees

Lay leadership: e.g. pastoral and preaching/teaching leadership within some churches, including in some cases leading the sacraments

Authority:

Types of authority will obviously depend on examples chosen:

e.g.

Ex officio/institutional authority: that of bishops, priests, rabbis, etc

May comment on ways in which authority is bestowed, e.g. at ordination.

May consider relative/hierarchical authority (e.g. the authority of an archbishop is greater than that of a local priest)

Authority of the pope: infallibility in ex cathedra statements

Authority through membership of leadership groups/committees/synods etc

Authority of elders in Presbyterian churches

Charismatic authority: through the leader's personality or preaching

Authority of scholarship and learning: e.g. the traditional role of the rabbi; a Muslim who is Hafiz

Authority through religious experience: the testimony which they give of this gives them authority within the religious community.

Max L5 if authority is not linked to types of leaders

(30 marks)

AO1

0	4
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‘Religious leaders are the most important source of authority for religious believers today.’ How far do you agree?

Agree:

They have an immediacy;

Local leaders may be within the community: they know what people are doing;

People can relate to them

The leaders may report people to parents or family members

National leaders are recognisable and people can relate to them more than to authorities such as Scripture or tradition

Disagree:

Scripture as the most important source of authority

God as the most important authority

Conscience as authority

Some may argue that religious leaders have lost authorities through scandals such as Catholic priests and child abuse

Or that the more secularised forms of leadership, such as non stipendiary priests, mean that religious leaders are less ‘set apart’ and thus have lost authority.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 3 Issues of identity and belonging**0****5**

Examine the times and facilities needed for the practice of religion in the UK today. You may refer to one or more religion(s) in your answer.

Times

Need for members of faiths to be able to observe their practices

Time for actual worship as well as observation of e.g. Shabbat

Christians – Sunday, etc

Prayer times for Muslims

Observations related to festivals

e.g. Muslims during Ramadan, and need for understanding of physical pressures of fasting;

Times for festivals – exemplification expected

Need to show awareness of tensions with standard working/education patterns for those whose religion is in a minority.

Facilities

Most obvious examples are likely to relate to places for worship; these may include buildings for worship

Also Muslim prayer rooms – expect some awareness of what is required in this – clean, no decorations, washing facilities

Multi-faith prayer rooms found in many public places, e.g. airports, sometimes in commercial centres, etc

Facilities within the home; Shrines- e.g. within Hinduism, Some Sikh households may have a room to house the Guru Granth Sahib

Quiet spaces, not specific to a particular religion

Max L5 if both times and facilities not addressed.

(30 marks)**AO1****0****6**

‘It is not reasonable for all religious groups to expect that there should be times and facilities for the practice of their religion.’

How far do you agree?

Agree

It can be disruptive to life and to business if everything has to stop for the religious practices of a few individuals

Many practical considerations, including providing all necessary facilities

Society works around the practices and values of majority culture

Not all may be really religious – some may use it as excuse

Should religious rights take precedence over other commitments which people may have for which they may want time and space?

Disagree

Human rights issues – people should be able to practise their religion.

If one religion has the right to practise, then all should

Social and working communities should accommodate the varying needs

Practical difficulties can usually be overcome.

(15 marks)**AO2**

Question 4 An introduction to New Religious Movements (NRMs)

0	7
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Examine the nature of New Religious Movements (NRMs).

Usually defined as those less than 200 years old, though often much younger
Many arising from various forms of American revivalism at end of 19th/beginning of 20th century
Usually, though not always, recognisable as off shoot of mainstream religious group
Often having some distinctive teaching which marks them out as significantly different from mainstream groups
Will usually fall into category of either sect or cult
Many with strong charismatic leader
Often having a strong eschatological emphasis, frequently millenarian - expect some development of this
May be seen as reaction to culture or events of the time in which it arose
Usually having strict rules
Expecting high level of commitment from its members.
May be world-rejecting to a greater or lesser extent, or world-accommodating or affirming.

Appropriate exemplification expected for marks of L5 and above

(30 marks)

AO1

0	8
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'New Religious Movements are only ever short-lived.'

Assess this claim.

Agree

Likely to 'fizzle out' after the immediacy of the event to which they react has worn off
Novelty wears off
Or death of charismatic leader
If they grow and take root, they lose their NRM characteristics and become mainstream denominations
As they mature, their beliefs become less 'extreme' and there is greater accommodation with other groups

Disagree

Some clearly do become well established, and yet retain their NRM characteristics
e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses, LDS
In a literal sense, every religious movement was once new; early Christians, a 'sect', Early Methodists, a 'sect'

Some may argue that movements may change their form, but still retain essential beliefs, and thus prove that they are far from short lived

(15 marks)

AO2

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion