
A-LEVEL

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RSS07 New Testament
Mark scheme

2060
June 2014

Version/Stage: 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 Assessment Writer.

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.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Examination Levels of Response

Religious Studies (Advanced Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

<i>Level</i>	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	

RSS07: *New Testament***Question 1 How the synoptic gospels came into being**

0	1	Examine the oral tradition behind the synoptic gospels.
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Students should define “oral tradition”. They may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited.

- There is no existing written record from Jesus’ lifetime. The earliest written account of Jesus is in Paul’s letters (1 Thess. c51CE); Paul mentions little about Jesus’ life or sayings. The earliest gospel is thought to be Mark (c70CE).
- Gap of c20 years between the death of Jesus and 1 Thess. & 35+ years before Mark, during which the story of Jesus’ life and work was mainly spread by word of mouth. Without this oral transmission, much of the material would have been lost.
- Accounts of events, miracles and the passion, and parables and sayings were transmitted separately as single units without any specific order.
- Jewish tradition has a long history of oral transmission.
- The use of storytelling and sayings was normal in a largely non-literate society.
- The stories and sayings spread as Christianity spread: teaching converts, binding communities. Local adaptations to suit the context (Sitz im Leben) arise as the stories spread.
- Some evidence of oral sources can be seen in the synoptic gospels, e.g. sayings (Lord’s Prayer) and elements of the passion narratives, suggesting that gospel writers preserved the oral form.
- Luke specifically refers to things “handed on to us” in his prologue.
- Form criticism can identify specific units of oral tradition.
- Belief in imminent parousia means that a written record was not required.

Expect specific examples of synoptic material that show evidence of oral transmission.

[30 marks] AO1

0

2

'The gospels were written down too long after the events they describe to be accurate.'

Assess this view.

Students may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited.

For the viewpoint:

- 35 years is too long for an accurate memory of events in people who were there.
- People who wrote the gospels were probably not witnesses.
- Oral tradition - message is passed from person to person: Chinese whisper effect.
- Differences between gospels evidence for inaccuracy.
- Gospel writers' agenda was not accurate account.
- Oral tradition may reflect the needs of the communities rather than historical fact

Challenge to the viewpoint:

- 35 years is not that long in the context of nearly 2000 years of transmission.
- Jewish oral tradition well established as reliable.
- Luke's Gospel refers to eyewitnesses
- Accounts are more similar than different, harmonising accounts for full picture.
- Form and redaction criticism are based on wrong assumptions – the gospels are the word of God.
- Mark's gospel may use Peter as a source, so is likely to be accurate.

Students may refer to editing of gospels. They may question what is meant by "accurate"

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 2 Aspects of Jesus' teaching and action, parables and healings

0

3

With particular reference to the Parable of the Sower, examine the theology and teaching found in parables.

Students may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited. Relevant reference to other parables should be credited.

Theology is the ideas and beliefs of the writer, whereas teaching is what Jesus says or does.

Students may define what a parable is:

- Narrative using familiar situations to tell a story which presents a religious truth.
- Extended metaphor.
- Jesus' development of the Jewish tradition of fables in midrash.

Theology:

- They present an understanding about "the word of God"
- They present the relationship between God and humankind
- They expose the person and work of Jesus:
 - Present Jesus as a teacher of skill and insight – interpretation of parable of Sower.
 - Show him as a man of the people – agrarian society.
 - Show him as an interpreter of God: To you has been given the secret of the Kingdom of God, but for those outside everything comes in parables.
 - Sower parable leads into a discussion of role of Jesus.
- They present an understanding of the importance of faith.

Teaching:

- The word of God is available to all but many will not bear good fruit.
- Jesus' interpretation of the Parable of the Sower: listeners need to be 'good soil'.
- Jesus explains the purpose of parables.

If no reference to the Parable of the Sower, cap at Level 4.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

4

‘Jesus’ parables have little to say to Christians today.’**Assess this view.**

Students may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited.

Arguments for the claim:

- Parables depend on historical, geographical and social context to be understood.
- Different versions mean that it is difficult to be certain what the parable means.
- Directed at a non-literate, agricultural, oral community so not relevant to 21st century.
- Some parables look towards the death and/or resurrection of Jesus, and those events have already happened, so parables are no longer necessary.

Other views:

- Still read, preached and studied today so they must have something to say.
- We know enough about the original context to be able to make sense of them.
- Timeless: can be reinterpreted in the light of present context.
- Scholars can interpret parables so that people today can understand them.
- Jesus’ parables are part of the Bible as “God’s word”, so remain relevant to Christians today.

[15 marks]**AO2**

Question 3 The arrest, trial and death of Jesus**0****5****Examine the similarities between Matthew's and Luke's accounts of the trials of Jesus.**

Students may refer to some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited.

- Peter's denial (but sequence different)
- Trial before the Sanhedrin (Matthew – same night; Luke – the following day).
- Trial before Pilate (but more narrative in Luke, and Luke also has episode with Herod).
- Release of Barabbas (but Matthew has blood guilt).
- Mocking of Jesus (Luke – before Sanhedrin trial; Matthew – after Pilate's condemnation),
- Students may consider some explanation of the way the similarities diverge (e.g., different sequence of events; more narrative; different emphasis)

Students do not have to include all of the above for the top levels. If the similarities are just listed rather than examined, cap at Level 4.

[30 marks]**AO1****0****6****'The crucifixion of Jesus was justified.'****Assess this claim with particular reference to Luke's account of the trials.**

Students may clarify to whom the crucifixion was justified. They may refer to the political situation and/or to Jewish-Roman relations. Students may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited.

In support of the claim, Luke gives reasons based on his account of the trials.

- Blasphemy (Sanhedrin),
- Pilate ("one who was perverting the people" – not guilty, gives in to mob.),
- Herod (accused before Herod, no reply, mocked).

So this suggests that crucifixion was justified on account of blasphemy.

Also

- Theologically justified as part of God's plan
- Politically justified because Pilate was required to prevent riots.

But challenging the claim:

- Crucifixion was a Roman punishment: Jews did not have authority to condemn to death, so the Sanhedrin trial could not justify crucifixion.
- Pilate specifically finds Jesus not guilty in Luke, so no crime against Roman law.
- Pilate's decision depends on the demand of the mob.

So this suggests that there was no reason except Pilate giving in to the mob.

If no reference at all to Luke's account, cap at Level 4.

[15 marks]**AO2**

Question 4 The resurrection of Jesus**0****7****Explain what the different endings of Mark's Gospel teach about the person of Jesus.**

Students may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited. Students do not have to discuss all three endings,

Expect some brief discussion of which ending of Mark is authentic.

Shortest:

- Still referred to as Jesus of Nazareth – human terms.
- “Look, this is where they laid him” – he really died.
- He has been raised – but no elaboration.
- Fulfils Jesus' prediction “there you will see him just as he told you”.

Shorter ending:

- Jesus sent out universal message.
- Jesus is the source of eternal salvation.

Long ending:

- Jesus was different after resurrection (appeared in another form).
- Jesus final work on earth is the Great Commission.
- Jesus' name is the source of continuing works of power and miracles.
- Jesus sits at the right hand of God.

If only one ending is discussed, cap at Level 4.

[30 marks]**AO1****0****8****To what extent are the resurrection narratives in Mark's Gospel important for Christian faith today?**

Students may make some of the following points, but any relevant material may be credited.

Relevant:

- Lack of detail means there is scope for meaningful interpretation today.
- Shorter ending with abrupt last line allows Christians to speculate.
- Lack of supernatural effects makes it more plausible.
- Longer ending ties up all loose ends and harmonises with other gospels.
- Longer ending is used by some fundamentalist churches as justification for snake handling and drinking poison.

Less relevant

- Unfinished story – if the women told no-one, then how did people find out?
- Lack of detail makes it rather an anti-climax, when resurrection should be important.
- Snake handling and poison-drinking are unbelievable and dangerous – give Christianity a bad name.
- Christians confused by too many variations in the text.
- We have other accounts, so Mark's narratives are not essential.

[15 marks]**AO2**