



AS-LEVEL

Religious Studies

RSS10 World Religions 2: Christianity OR Judaism OR Islam 1
Mark scheme

2060
June 2015

Version 1: Final Mark Scheme

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	<i>Marks</i>	AS Descriptor AO2	<i>Marks</i>	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	
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	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.
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance.	0	

RSS10: Section A Christianity

Indicative content

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 1 Some beliefs about God: Trinity and salvation

0

1

Explain both of the following:

- **Christian ideas about salvation**
- **Christian beliefs about why salvation is necessary.**

Ideas about salvation

- Expect some explanation of what salvation is – ‘being saved’ from effects of sin and death.
- Role of grace.
- Ideas of atonement especially through the death of Jesus.
- Some may cite various theories of the atonement.
- Jesus as ‘saviour’.
- Easter celebrating salvific events.
- Eschatological approach – is emphasis on salvation now or for the end of time?
- Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions emphasise importance of Christian community in salvation.
- Catholics believe they can experience God’s grace through the sacraments and the mass.
- The Protestant emphasis is on salvation through faith.
- Christians agree that the relationship between God and the people has been changed through death and resurrection of Jesus and this will be finally and completely changed in the future.

Why salvation is necessary

- Fundamental ideas of the nature of humanity, making salvation necessary.
- Ideas on the ‘Fall’ – and sinfulness of humanity.
- Ideas on Original Sin – especially as expressed by Augustine.
- Leading to need for grace and salvation.
- Traditional beliefs about the nature of the afterlife for those who are not saved.

NB No more than Level 5 if only one part covered but there is likely to be some fluidity between the two parts.

[30 marks]

AO1

0

2

Assess the view that the idea of salvation is vitally important for Christians today.

In support

- It is central to Christian teaching.
- Salvation is still a major part of Christian language.
- Salvation is particularly important for some Christian groups, including those who stress the sacraments as a means of grace necessary for salvation, and those who stress eschatological teachings.

Other views

- There is today a focus on this world and not necessarily the world to come.
- Fewer people have negative views of human nature.
- Belief in humanity ‘come of age’ and taking responsibility for own destiny.

[15 marks]

AO2

Candidates need to focus on key words “vitally” and “today” to access higher levels.

Question 2 Christian scriptures: nature and purpose

0	3
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Examine the following types of material found in the Christian scriptures:

- **Jewish law**
- **Gospels.**

This may be approached in a variety of ways. Students are not expected to have detailed knowledge of all the points here, and they may exemplify in a wide range of ways.

Jewish law

- May start with 'law books' as found in the Old Testament.
- Containing central beliefs about God and his relationship with his people.
- May focus on the Law given to Moses and seen as being for all time – importance of Decalogue for Christians.
- Jewish law but relevant for Christians as a basis for Christian law.
- Other important teachings, eg on social responsibility and environmental issues (other laws and creation narratives).
- Provides social and religious background against which Jesus lived.
- Important part of lectionary in most Churches – so regularly read.

Gospels

- Synoptics and Fourth Gospel.
- Synoptics the story of the main events in Jesus' life.
- Theological teachings in Fourth Gospel.
- Gospels contain material relating to key teachings: incarnation, nativity, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.
- Teachings of Jesus – through parables and Sermon on the Mount.
- Teachings about Jesus – through miracles.
- Importance of Gospel readings in Church services – tradition in some Churches of standing for this.
- Gospel material essential to the Eucharist.

There needs to be clear exemplification for marks above Level 4.
Maximum Level 5 if only one part addressed.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0	4
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Assess the claim that different types of material found in the Christian scriptures are of equal importance to Christians.

The answer may focus on material addressed in Question 03 or range more widely.

In support

- The Bible is the word of God – so all material important.
- All used as part of lectionary and for private Bible reading.
- Idea of continuing revelation.
- Scripture used for many different purposes, so different types are used in different ways, but equally important.
- Different types of scripture may include Christian guidance from texts beyond the bible.

Other views

- Many would say that the New Testament carries more weight for Christians than the Old Testament.
- For many, the Gospel material on the resurrection is the most important part.
- Some parts of the Bible clearly dated and relating to a very different society eg Paul's views on women.

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 3 Aspects of Christian worship

0

5

Examine the role of the laity in Christian worship.

- Expect awareness that roles will differ between Churches.
- Recognition that some Churches have no professional clergy, so all worship led by laity.
- In all Churches, participating in worship, joining in the liturgy and responding to activities.
- Sharing in the peace.
- Lay people may assist with the distribution of the Eucharist, as a lay Eucharistic minister in some Roman Catholic Churches, or authorised lay persons may do so in Anglican churches, or various volunteers may help with this in other Churches. Role of elders in Presbyterian Churches.
- Preaching: many churches rely heavily on lay preachers (eg Methodist local preachers). Role of lay readers in Anglican Church.
- Laity frequently involved in Scripture readings.
- In some Churches at least some of the prayers led by lay people.
- Laity leading the Church music, whether organ, worship band or choir.
- Importance of spontaneous contributions to worship by laity in Pentecostal Churches.
- Role of the laity in facilitating worship – organisation, preparation, etc.
- Taking up offertory.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

6

‘The clergy are not needed in Christian worship today.’**Evaluate this view.****In support**

- Many churches which have a professional clergy have always relied heavily on lay leadership of worship (eg Methodist local preachers).
- Today, with reductions in the number of clergy, many churches are relying increasingly on laity, in order to maintain services. Clergy are having to cover groups of parishes, so leaving more worship in the hands of laity.
- Also, in 21st century, increasing sense of equality, leading to greater lay participation.
- Clergy have obviously never been necessary for private devotions.

Other views

- In many churches, clergy essential for certain aspects of worship, eg the sacraments, although in some it is recognised that in certain circumstances, Eucharist can be administered by others.
- Worship is seen by many to need leaders, and clergy would be regarded as the ‘natural’ people to do this.
- For many, clergy still have important role which is not met by lay leadership.
- Clergy are seen as having an authority which lay leaders may not have.

[15 marks]**AO2**

Question 4 A Christian way of life: initiation, marriage and death

0

7

Explain Christian beliefs about marriage and outline the practices associated with Christian marriage.**Explain beliefs**

Students could cover any tradition in their response. Some of the main aspects may be:

- Marriage is a sacrament for some; it is one of the seven sacraments of Roman Catholic Church.
- For others, not sacrament but a divine institution, established by God.
- Belief that marriage is for life.
- It is the union of two people in the sight of God.
- Joining of two people is believed to reflect the union of Christ with his followers.
- In their marriage to each other Christian couples will experience and learn of God's love.
- In the Gospels, Jesus taught that God's purpose was that marriage should be a lifelong and intimate union.
- Beliefs centre round the right relationship for sex; the procreation of children and the couples mutual help and comfort in life.
- Christians do not teach that marriage is obligatory for all.
- There may be reference to differing views on re-marriage of divorced persons and of differing attitudes to same-sex marriage.

Outline practices

Students could cover any tradition in their response. Some of the main aspects may be:

- In the Church of England Banns or licence before the marriage.
- In most Churches set form to meet legal requirements – in some, legal and religious parts will be separate.
- Most services will include the elements of declarations, vows, giving of rings, proclamation.
- Bible readings.
- Sermon / address.
- Some services may include the Eucharist.
- Signing of registers – legal aspect and requirement, but will include names of clergy etc.
- Quaker weddings – all of the meeting are witnesses.

NB focus is on Christian marriage – limited credit can be given for points which are merely social customs.

Maximum Level 4 if only outline only covered.

Maximum Level 5 if only beliefs covered.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0	8
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‘Christian views of marriage are completely outdated.’

Assess this claim.

In support

- Traditional Christian views on marriage are based on heterosexual relationships, society, the law and some Christians now accept gay marriage.
- Many people are getting married outside of the Church and see no need to have a marriage blessed by God.
- Fewer people getting married at all, whether or not in Church, because marriage itself is seen as outdated by many.
- Serial monogamy is the experience of many, and this is in conflict with Christian views of marriage for life.

Other views

- Christians see marriage as a gift from God and entirely compatible with the modern world.
- Christian understandings are seen as timeless.
- Christian beliefs about the family are important for bringing up children within the Christian life.

[15 marks]

AO2

Section B Judaism

Indicative content

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 5 God and his people

0

9

Explain challenges to traditional Jewish ideas about God.

Ideas about God may be identified, eg

- Monotheism.
- Creator.
- God who acts in history.
- God who is just.
- God who cares for his people.
- Special relationship with chosen people.
- Communicates with people.
- Covenant God.
- Omnipotence.
- Omniscience.
- Omnibenevolence.
- Supreme goodness.

Challenges:

- God who is just and acts in history – challenged by persecution and the Holocaust.
- God who acts in history – challenged by many events in world history, past and present.
- Omnipotence – challenged if God doesn't intervene and reveal his power; also by environmental issues.
- Communicates with people – for many, and with painful experiences, God seems silent.
- Creator – challenged by environmental issues and climate change.
- Just – challenged in world of injustice.
- Cares for his people, Covenant God, just – all challenged by Holocaust.
- Covenant God and Just – challenged by evil and suffering in the world.
- Monotheism – some may suggest that this is challenged by a multifaith society.

Focus here is on the **challenges**, to the idea about God not on challenges to Judaism.

[30 marks]

AO1

1	0
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‘Traditional Jewish ideas about God are as relevant now as they were in the past.’

Assess this view.

In support

- Although the ideas arose in Biblical period, they are not tied to that time, and are applicable in any age.
- God is beyond time, so it follows that ideas about him should be timeless.
- God’s nature does not change through time.
- Jewish ideas about God are essentially the same as they have always been.
- Orthodox Judaism accepts scripture as the word of God so ideas within are unchangeable.

Other views

- People’s world views have changed, and so have their ideas of God.
- Holocaust was such an enormous event that it fundamentally changed ideas.
- Traditional ideas no longer have meaning.
- Liberal and Romantic Judaism have changed ideas.
- Reform and liberal Jews challenge the authority of the scripture as word of God.
- Scientific theories often accepted.

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 6 Scripture

1	1
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Explain the nature and use of the Talmud in Judaism.

The nature of the Talmud

- Application of the Law to life.
- Developed from Oral law-Mishnah, and commentaries on this – Gemara.
- Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds.
- There may be some detail on development of Talmud.
- Divided into 6 Sedarim – Zera’im (seeds), mo’ed (seasons), nashim (women), Nezikim (damages), kodashim (holy things), and Toharot (purities).
- Subject matter practical, though debate may be very ‘academic’.
- Distinctive methods of Talmudic debate.
- Distinctive layout of a page of Talmud.

The use of the Talmud

- To inform people on practical issues today – especially Gemara.
- To guide on issues of practice and observation.
- Rabbinic scholarship and response.
- As a basis for rabbinic thought today.
- In religious courts (and particularly use in marriage, divorce and custody of children).
- Main subject studied in the yeshivot (Jewish academies).
- Studied in some Jewish schools.

Maximum Level 5 if only nature or use discussed.

[30 marks]**AO1**

1	2
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‘The Torah cannot be fully understood without the Talmud.’**Assess this view.****In support**

- Jewish scriptures are complex, and Law written centuries ago, so this interpretative tool is needed.
- In a religion in which adherence to the Law is so important, it is essential to have guidance of this sort.
- Following the debates of the rabbis helps people today to understand the scriptures.
- Its content is so wide-ranging that it answers the majority of questions.

Other views

- If Torah is the word of God and divine revelation, it does not need interpretation by other scriptures.
- The Torah speaks for itself.
- Discussions of the rabbis can never be as significant and meaningful as the Torah itself.
- The Talmudic debates are themselves now dated.
- Some may argue the word ‘fully’ and suggest that it is helpful, but the Torah can be understood without it.

[15 marks]**AO2**

Question 7 Aspects of worship and festivals: Shabbat, Yom Kippur and Pesach

1

3

Outline the practices of Yom Kippur and explain how these practices reflect the central beliefs of this festival.

Outline practices

This is only an outline, but students should make some mention of both home and synagogue, although they may well concentrate more on one of these.

Home

- Preparation during the 10 days of penitence, use of mikveh (ritual bath) and food sent to the poor.
- Fasting for 25 hours will take place.
- Families ask for forgiveness from one another.
- They may light candles to remember dead relatives.
- Blessings are said.
- Money is collected for charity and there are festive meals before the fast with prayers.
- Prohibitions on washing, perfumes, sex, leather shoes.

Synagogue

- Recitation of confessional prayers on afternoon before festival.
- Jews will almost certainly be there on the day.
- Seeking forgiveness from each other.
- Five services will be held in the synagogue.
- Use of the kittel and white clothing.
- The ark is covered in white and there is an account read of the ritual of the temple in Jerusalem.
- The service will usually end with the first line of the Shema and the shout of Elijah.
- Shofar is blown at the end.

Beliefs

- Stress on repentance and forgiveness – belief that God will forgive.
- God can only forgive after people have forgiven each other- hence seeking forgiveness from each other.
- Forgiveness and purity in the symbolism of clothing and covering in white.
- For some the kittel is a symbol of the shroud of death, and therefore of final judgement.
- Belief in collective responsibility – prayers are all in first person plural.
- In the services themselves including Kol Nidre and N'eilah, (closing of the gates) the emphasis will be upon atonement and forgiveness but with the clear idea that forgiveness is a gift from God, not a right.
-

- Belief in purity – mikveh.
- Importance of commitment – following rites of Yom Kippur seen as measure of commitment.

Maximum Level 4 if only the outline given.

Need to stress how the practices reflect the central beliefs to access higher levels.

[30 marks]

AO1

1	4
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‘Jews today find little meaning in seeking forgiveness for sins.’

Assess this view.

In support

- Influence of experience and modern understandings of human nature.
- Confessing their wrong doings and seeking forgiveness will not alter anything.
- Seeking forgiveness meaningless unless accompanied by reparation or changing of ways.

Other views

- God can forgive if people confess.
- Ideas of atonement.
- The very act of seeking forgiveness can be very powerful for the individual concerned.
- It keeps the spirit of Judaism together if people are honest with themselves and each other.

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 8 Styles of Judaism: Orthodox and Reform beliefs and practices

1

5

Examine Orthodox Jewish beliefs about the Temple.

- Students may give some relevant background such as: The Temple in Jerusalem refers to a series of structures located on the Temple Mount in the old city of Jerusalem.
- Historically, two temples were built at this location, It was the centre of ancient Judaism according to Hebrew scripture.
- As the sole place of Jewish sacrifice, the Temple replaced the local sanctuaries.
- According to Orthodox Jewish belief, the Temple acts as the figurative ‘footstool’ of God's presence in the physical world.
- God's ‘dwelling place’.
- Despite the destructions of the Temple, it is still believed to be a place of prayer, as shown by praying at Western Wall.
- It is written that the Temple of Jerusalem will be rebuilt by a King from the lineage of David.
- The desire for the restoration of the Temple has been the prayer of the Orthodox Jew since the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70.
- Jewish eschatology hopes for the building of a Third Temple in Jerusalem associated with the coming of the Messiah.
- ‘Next year in Jerusalem’ (Pesach).
- Each generation in which the Temple is not rebuilt is considered as if they destroyed the Temple.

[30 marks]**AO1**

1

6

‘Beliefs about the Temple are irrelevant to 21st century Judaism.’**Assess this claim.****In support**

- Many are focussed on coping with the demands of life in the 21st century, as well as the demands of following Jewish law.
- For many the Temple belongs to another time, and is geographically far away, so beliefs about it seem irrelevant.
- Beliefs are mainly eschatological, and people are focussed on the here and now
- Many may see rebuilding as unlikely, especially as Dome of the Rock mosque is on the site.
- Reform and Liberal Judaism have less emphasis upon Temple.
- Many have no desire to return to animal sacrifices.
- No longer active priesthood.

Other views

- Traditions regarding the temple are vital for the survival of Orthodox Judaism.
- Belief in the coming of Messiah is still central, and beliefs about the Temple are integral to this.
- Many work actively for the cause of restoration.
- Importance demonstrated by the numbers who still go to pray at Western Wall.

[15 marks]**AO2**

Section C Islam 1 The Way of Submission

Indicative content

Note: This content is indicative rather than prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to all the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels of response.

Question 9 The Qur'an

1

7

Examine how the Qur'an is used by Muslims in worship and in everyday life.

Worship

- Public readings of the Qur'an at the Friday Jummah prayers.
- In prayer, the opening chapter of the Qur'an is recited at the beginning of each rak'ah, at the five daily prayers.
- Used as an aid during prayers.
- Sermon (khutbah) in the Mosque is where the Imam will make reference to the Qur'an.
- Read during personal worship at home and in the mosque.
- Public readings during the month of Ramadan where it is divided up into 30 equal parts called juz and these are read over the course of the month.
- Read at special events such as marriages and funerals.

Everyday life

- Source of guidance in all aspects of daily life.
- Life is ibadah (worship) and Qur'an guides Muslims on the straight path.
- It is memorised and studied.
- Personal contemplation, religious, social, moral guidance.
- Use in education.
- Used as a source of law and history; teaching about Islam.
- Reading at home.
- Mosque schools / madrassah.
- Public use at key times.

Maximum Level 5 if only one of worship or everyday life included.

[30 marks]

AO1

1

8

‘The Qur’an is the only source of guidance that a Muslim needs.’

Assess this claim.

In support

- Expect comments on the status of the Qur’an as the direct Word of God which he will protect.
- Final revelation to humanity; unchanged since the time of the Prophet.
- Sense of uniqueness in its nature and authority.
- Reference may also be made to modernist movements in Islam, some of which challenge or reject the value of the hadith and hence the traditional understanding of Shari’a.
- Use in madrassah and importance of learning verses in Arabic.

Other views

- Use of the sunnah / hadith alongside the Qur’an as a source of holy law.
- Role of qiyas.
- Role of Ijtihad to derive up to date laws.
- The role of the Ulema (Muslim scholars) or Imam to counter the claim.
- Cannot address all issues today.
- Qur’an was written for the Muslims at the time of Muhammad only.
- Hadith has a more relevant nature to it for Muslims because it is the Qur’an in action.

[15 marks]

AO2

Question 10 The Five Pillars

1

9

Explain the concept of Pillar in Islam.

- Basic idea of something which holds up the faith.
- Pillar as vital support, without which the whole structure of faith would collapse.
- Muslims often think of their faith as a kind of building for God held up by the five Pillars.
- Interdependence of Pillars – the five basic duties a Muslim must perform.
- A Pillar is the active expression of faith.
- They are the framework for every Muslim’s life.
- Sometimes the Qur’an is seen as Islam’s foundation and the five Pillars are the uprights or supports.
- Completion of each daily duty demands right intent and shows total submission to God.
- Prayer and fasting in particular might be mentioned as both have spiritual and physical aspects reflecting submission and devotion to God.
- They also reflect Islam as a community of believers, united in common belief and practice.

Focus here is on the concept of Pillar. If “concept” is not explained specifically, maximum L4.

[30 marks]

AO1

2

0

‘Understanding the concept of ‘Pillar’ is essential to an understanding of Islam.’**How far do you agree?****In support**

- It is central to an understanding of Islam.
- Students might argue it is the basis of all Islam and the ummah to follow the five Pillars of faith.
- The first Pillar alone – the declaration of faith – is sufficient to make one a Muslim. The others make one ‘good’ so the whole concept of ‘Pillar’ is vital to Islam.
- The spiritual significance of ‘Pillar’ means that it could be argued that to live by the five Pillars makes a Muslim what he or she is.

Other views

- To understand Islam is to follow the will of Allah, and conceptual understanding does not matter.
- One understands Islam through living in submission.
- Following the five Pillars is more important than the concept.

[15 marks]**AO2****Question 11 The doctrine of God**

2

1

Examine what shirk means in Islam.

- Students may suggest an understanding as association of anything with God as the worst sin in Islam – blasphemous, idolatrous and pagan.
- There may be reference to different forms of Shirk, Shirk by association and Shirk by deification and Shirk by negation.
- Shirk is putting anything on the same level as God (eg self, money, family) and if one does this one is no longer a Muslim.
- Superstition is a form of shirk, as it involves putting trust in something other than God.
- Islam prioritises belief in only one God with no partners or association.
- Muslims should not question the nature of God. They should not suggest that he is not supreme or alone or that another entity shares his power of this would be shirk.
- Muslims should not believe that any other being could forgive sins or judge or this would be shirk.
- Worship is of Allah alone.
- God is omnipotent and transcendent and Muslims should have total allegiance to Allah compared with pre-Islamic polytheism / idolatry.
- The concept of Tawhid is central to Islam.

[30 marks]**AO1**

2

2

'Shirk can never be forgiven.'**How far do you agree?****In support**

- The sin of shirk is the only sin that will not be forgiven.
- Shirk breaks the commitment that Muslims make when they recite the Shahadah so if this is broken, Allah will not be merciful.
- God is the controller of destiny and every creature comes under his power so he may choose not to be merciful if Muslims commit a sin.

Other views

- 'Merciful' is one of the 99 beautiful names of Allah and he is a loving and forgiving God, no matter what Muslims do.
- The Mu'tazila (historic school of philosophy) argued that for God to be truly just, humans must have freedom to choose good or evil without God determining the outcome and this would, in turn, show God as merciful.
- Muslims trying to make sure no one or nothing ever takes the central place of Allah may find it difficult, but God will be merciful, because he knows what they are trying to do.

[15 marks]**AO2**

Question 12 Key beliefs

2	3
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Outline the nature of prophets in Islam and explain how belief in prophets affects Muslim life.

Outline

- Human beings appointed by God.
- All the prophets are messengers and the means of communication.
- Rasul were Prophets to whom scripture had been revealed. Nabi prophets had the duty of propagating the teachings God grants them the gift of being infallible but remain human.
- Allah's taught the Prophets a degree of understanding about himself.
- They all lived virtuous and honourable lives.
- All are regarded as intermediaries of God and revealed his will to the world.
- Islam believes that all the Prophets (often said to be 124,000) were sent by Allah with the message of Islam as a true faith.

Explain

- Messengers from God who give guidance to Muslims.
- So Muslims are never without guidance.
- Idea that they brought the same, unchanging message at different times.
- Role of different prophets and their revelations, eg faithfulness of Adam and Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim as the 'friend of God' and was a staunch monotheist.
- Importance of Isa (Jesus) as a man of prayer.
- Role of Muhammad and the revelation of the Qur'an.
- Prophets setting an example to Muslims of how to live a good life.
- Particular examples from the life of Muhammad.
- Guiding Muslims on whether an action is right or wrong.

Expect some specific exemplification for Level 5 and above.

Maximum Level 4 if 'outline' only.
 Maximum Level 5 if 'explain' only.

[30 marks]

AO1

2	4
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‘Belief in prophets is vital for Muslims today.’

Assess this claim.

In support

- In all, Allah sent Prophets (124,000) to various tribes, lands and communities without which they would not have been guided.
- Risalah, or line of prophecy is seen as vital in Islam.
- Belief in prophethood is closely linked with the third article of faith; belief in holy books.
- Muhammad was the conveyor of the Qur’an which is vital to Islam.
- Centrality of Muhammad and of the other prophets in Muslim teaching.

Other views

- The Qur’an is the most vital part of Islam.
- The Muslim world has moved on in 1500 years since Muhammad and there are now different approaches to Islam.
- Prophets from the past have been rejected but Islam still survives.
- Muslims have the five pillars of faith to live by and do not require prophets as much in the modern world.

Candidates need to focus on “vital” and “today” to access the higher levels.

[15 marks]

AO2