



A-LEVEL

Religious Studies

RST3D Old Testament

Mark scheme

2060

June 2015

Version 1.0 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) A2 Level Descriptors

<i>Level</i>	A2 Descriptor AO1	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptor AO2	Marks <i>Unit 4 italics</i>	A2 Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
7	A thorough treatment of the topic, which may be in depth or breadth. Information is accurate and relevant. A thorough understanding is shown through good use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate good knowledge and understanding of diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is demonstrated. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated convincingly.	28-30 41-45	A very well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and critically analysed perceptively. Effective use is made of evidence to sustain an argument. Appropriate evaluation is fully supported by the reasoning. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related perceptively and maturely to the broader context and to human experience.	19-20 28-30	Appropriate form and style of writing; clear and coherent organisation of information; appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
6	A generally thorough treatment of the topic which may be in depth or breadth. Information is almost all accurate and mainly relevant. Clear understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples. Where appropriate, alternative views and / or scholarly opinion are satisfactorily explained. Knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are clearly demonstrated.	24-27 36-40	A well-focused response to the issue(s) raised. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought, are discussed and critically analysed. Appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument. There may be evidence of independent thought. The argument is related clearly to the broader context and to human experience.	16-18 24-27	
5	A satisfactory treatment of the topic. Information is mostly accurate and mainly relevant. A reasonable understanding is demonstrated through use of some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, some familiarity with diversity of views and / or scholarly opinion is shown. Some knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	20-23 29-35	A satisfactory response to the issue(s) raised. Views are explained with some supporting evidence and arguments, and some critical analysis. An evaluation is made that is consistent with some of the reasoning. Some of the response is related satisfactorily to the broader context and to human experience.	13-15 20-23	Mainly appropriate form and style of writing; generally clear and coherent organisation of information; mainly appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; good legibility and fairly high level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4	Key ideas and facts are included; demonstrates some understanding and coherence using some evidence and examples. Where appropriate, brief reference may be made to alternative views and / or scholarly opinion. Limited knowledge and understanding of connections with other elements of the course of study are demonstrated.	15-19 22-28	The main issue is addressed with some supporting evidence or argument, but the reasoning is faulty, or the analysis superficial or only one view is adequately considered. Little of the response is related to the broader context and to human experience.	10-12 15-19	Form and style of writing appropriate in some respects; some of the information is organised clearly and coherently; some appropriate and accurate use of specialist vocabulary; satisfactory legibility and level of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3	A summary of key points. Limited in depth or breadth. Answer may show limited understanding and limited relevance. Some coherence.	10-14 15-21	A basic attempt to justify a point of view relevant to the question. Some explanation of ideas and coherence.	7-9 10-14	
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 8-14	A superficial response to the question with some attempt at reasoning.	4-6 5-9	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 1-7	A few basic points, with no supporting argument or justification.	1-3 1-4	
0	Nothing of relevance.	0	No attempt to engage with the question or nothing of relevance	0	

RST3D: Old Testament**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 Ways of reading the Old Testament

0

1

Examine how critical theories may be applied to the Exodus traditions recorded in Exodus 14⁵ – 15²¹.

Reader response criticism

- Both regular and strong reader response criticism are concerned with the significance of the text for the reader and not with what the text meant for the authors, redactors, etc.
- It is seen as naïve and totally inappropriate to look for what the text ‘actually’ means; there is no right and wrong meaning.
- Fish stressed the importance of ‘interpretive communities’, ie the meaning of a text for the individual arose out of the group of which (s)he was a member.
- Liberation theology leads to a particular interpretation of the Exodus traditions that have political and religious significance in the situation of many Christian communities in Central and South America.

Source criticism

- The sources claimed to underlie the account of the crossing of the sea.
- Differences in content, style, theology, etc.

Form criticism

- The nature of the crossing of the sea.
- An epic tale with elements of myth.
- The poem in Exodus 15: its nature and construction, its possible Sitz im Leben.

Canonical criticism

- The traditions are to be seen as part of the whole of the canon of scripture and interpreted as such.
- The interpretation of the Exodus traditions will thus depend on whether it is seen as part of the Jewish Scriptures and their significance for 21st century Judaism or as part of the Christian Bible and its significance for 21st century Christians.

A wider variety of approaches is possible and fundamentalist theories may be credited, providing they display a scholarly basis and approach.

Maximum Level 5 if only one theory has been examined.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

2

‘Critical approaches have little value for those who are not Old Testament scholars.’

Assess this view.

In support

- The different types of biblical criticism, apart perhaps from reader response, ‘say’ little to the typical ‘person in the pew’.
- They do not meet the concerns / needs of ordinary Jews or Christians and do not enrich their spiritual lives.
- Critical theories are highly complex and often entail detailed understanding of the ancient world and of the background to the text.
- Within the different types of biblical criticism there is no overall agreement and the theories often seem highly subjective.

Other views

- It is patronising to suggest that only those trained in biblical scholarship can gain anything of value from critical insights.
- Source and form criticism deal with many concerns the untrained but thoughtful reader might have with the text in its final form, eg the contradictions within the account of the crossing of the sea, the element of miracle, the triumphalism in the Song of the Sea.
- Reader response approaches enable individuals and groups to derive something meaningful from texts that belong to a different age and culture.
- Those who are not scholars will in any case be approaching their study with critical views, whether or not they realise it, ie with reader response, so clearly the statement is invalid.

Support for arguments may but need not be restricted to the texts examined in the first part of the question.

[20 marks]

AO2

Question 2 God and humanity**0****3****Examine ideas about the human condition that are found in the traditions about Noah and about the Tower of Babel.****Noah**

- With exception of Noah, universal and total corruption.
- Total alienation from God – the heart being the seat of the will.
- The only hope for the future entails God destroying everything apart from Noah and starting again from scratch.
- Noah alone is righteous (in a trusting relationship with God) and blameless (a cultic term, meaning that he is acceptable to God).
- Humanity incapable of putting things right – only God's saving grace can enable a fresh start.
- The offering of sacrifice key to humanity's acceptance by God.
- The Noachide covenant brings promise in the place of judgement for humanity, but the consequences of the Fall remain – humans are fatally flawed from early life, and this is exemplified in the story of Noah's drunkenness and Ham's lack of respect.
- The human purpose is to procreate (reiteration of the first mitzvah) and humanity's power over the rest of creation is intensified.
- Loss of harmony between humans and animals reflected in humans now as carnivores.
- Principle of sanctity of human life – humans in the image of God.

The Tower of Babel

- Concerned with the emergence of different cultures, all with their own distinctive features.
- Cultural and language divisions the result of human actions.
- Loss of unity shown by the diffusion of language and a pointer to the disharmony that was present from the start of history.
- Derivation from bbl = to confuse.
- Humans by nature ambitious, creative but wanting to push the boundaries that had been seen as an intrinsic part of what it meant to be human.
- The fall of the tower symbolic of the destruction of Babylonian power, showing that the human condition is transient: cultures rise and fall.

Maximum Level 5 if only Noah or the Tower of Babel traditions are examined.
Appropriate use of biblical criticism (eg source and form criticism) and of Ancient Near Eastern mythology to be credited.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0	4
---	---

‘The traditions about Noah and about the Tower of Babel give a totally negative view of the human condition.’

How far do you agree?

In support

- In both traditions (and in the different sources underlying them) humanity is depicted as utterly and universally flawed.
- In both stories, human sin leads to judgement and punishment.
- Humanity can do nothing to help itself.
- The Tower of Babel tradition is the final one in the collection of ancient myths and it ends with the depressing depiction of humans alienated from one another by their inability to communicate with one another.

Other views

- God is able and willing to work with and through human failure and sin.
- The note of promise and salvation seen above all in the Noachide covenant is the climax of the Noah traditions and puts everything in perspective.
- The Tower of Babel story is an aetiological myth and is simply concerned to explain why nations speak different languages.
- The Babel story passes immediately onto the traditions relating to the ancestors of Abraham and the story of promise.

[20 marks]

AO2

Question 3 The ways in which people believed they should live their lives

0	5	Examine how the lives of the ancient Israelites were guided by Wisdom literature and by the Law.
----------	----------	---

Wisdom

- Focus of life to be God and development of trustful relationship - Wisdom 1¹; Ecclesiasticus 17²⁵.
- Recognition of human frailty and mortality in contrast to God's transcendence – Ecclesiasticus 43²⁷⁻³³.
- Avoidance of negative and carping attitude – Wisdom 1¹¹.
- Importance of honesty and of honest work – Wisdom 1³; 3¹⁵.
- Emphasis on a virtuous life, sexual purity – Wisdom 3¹³; 4¹.

The Law

- All aspects of life covered in the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant.
- Importance of religious duties – no physical representations of God, Sabbath observance etc in Decalogue.
- Family and social obligations in both Decalogue and the Covenant Code – based on respect for others and justice towards all, including slaves.
- Expectation of fair compensation for those who have been wronged.
- Compassion to be shown to the poor and vulnerable – a pawned cloak not to be kept overnight.
- Expression of sexuality strictly regulated.

Maximum Level 5 if only Wisdom or Law examined.

Relevant use of appropriate texts other than those set for study to be credited.

[30 marks]

AO1

0

6

‘For the ancient Israelites, Wisdom literature was more important than the Law.’

Assess this view.

In support

- For those living in the diaspora alongside those from different cultures, Wisdom gave a universally applicable ethic.
- Its guidance applied equally to those living in Israel and those in the diaspora, nor was it tied to one particular age; this was in contrast to the Book of the Covenant that was intended for the largely agricultural community living at the time of the early monarchy.
- It was a social ethic with a strong emphasis on everyday life.
- It appealed to common sense and to everyday experience, whereas the Law contained many ritual and other requirements that were not particularly a concern of the ordinary people.
- The teaching on immortality as the reward for a good life would have proved a stimulus to good behaviour for many ordinary Israelites.

Other views

- The belief that the Law was given to Moses and the key place it had played throughout history would have reinforced its importance for each new generation of Israelites; the similarities of Jewish Wisdom literature to that of Egypt etc might have reduced its authority and significance in the eyes of many ordinary Jews.
- For those living in the diaspora alongside other cultures, the Law reinforced their sense of identity as God’s chosen people and helped them to uphold the covenant.
- The principles underlying the regulations of the Law were applicable to all Israelites, whether they lived in Israel or in the diaspora.
- The regulations of the Law helped people know where they stood and how to behave; in contrast, Wisdom literature must often have seemed nebulous.
- Much of the Decalogue was universally applicable, whatever the society and whatever the age, and there were universal principles behind the individual laws of the Book of the Covenant that would also have provided useful guidance.

[20 marks]

AO2

Question 4 How the people coped in times of crisis – suffering and hope

0

7

Examine the main themes of exilic prophecy.

- Explicit monotheism – the Babylonian gods are man-made statues.
- God is the Lord of creation – the source of the whole of the cosmos.
- God is the Lord of history – he is responsible for the events of the past and is behind the rise of Cyrus, who is his agent and his ‘anointed one’.
- Stress on transcendence and holiness of God – ‘To whom will you compare him?’
- Also stress on his immanence – images stressing the intimacy of his relationship with Israel and God as Israel’s go’el.
- The exile, seen as God’s punishment for past sins, is now at an end – God has forgiven Israel.
- Predictions of an imminent and glorious return to Judah – a second Exodus even more spectacular than the first.
- Role of the Servant in establishing justice, bringing deliverance for Israel and enlightening the nations.

Relevant use of exilic texts other than those set for study to be credited.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

8

‘For the exiles, the most important teachings of exilic prophecy were those that predicted the return to Judah.’**Assess this view.****In support**

- The demoralised exiles were given hope through such oracles.
- Such prophecies more than anything else renewed their trust in God.
- They were able to see their situation in the context of the past and to make sense of it.
- These teachings reinforced their awareness of themselves as the chosen people.
- They restored their national pride.

Other views

- Most in fact chose not to return to Judah when given permission to do so, so these teachings could not have had great significance for them.
- Isaiah’s teaching on the nature of God answered their doubts as to his power and goodness, given the magnificence that surrounded them and it enabled them not to feel threatened by the changing international situation.
- His teaching on Israel’s / the Servant’s role as bringing enlightenment to other nations was not dependent on them returning to Judah.
- Isaiah’s monotheist view of God made irrelevant the question of where the people lived as he could be reached anywhere.
- God was present in a foreign land as he was not just the God of Judah.

[20 marks]**AO2**