



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2010**

**Religious Studies**

**RSS08**

**Religion and Contemporary Society**

**AS Unit H**

**Final**

***Mark Scheme***

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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 20<sup>th</sup> century

0	1	<b>Examine the distribution of the main religious groups within the United Kingdom today.</b>
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- Many may start with basic numerical distribution from the 2001 census:
  - 71% Christian
  - 2.7% Muslim
  - 1% Hindu
  - 0.5% Jewish
  - 0.3% Buddhist
  - 0.3% Sikh
- Christianity as major religion, in many forms.
- Anglicanism widespread, with Church of England in England, and Church in Wales, and Scottish Episcopal Church.
- Catholicism has national spread, but particularly strong in some areas, e.g. major industrial cities, especially Liverpool.
- Recent rise in Catholic practice with Polish immigrants.
- Presbyterians in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- Jewish populations traditionally in North London, Manchester, Leeds, Edinburgh, Newcastle, with Hasidic communities in North London, Gateshead and North Manchester.
- Muslim communities widespread, with more than two million Muslims. Large concentrations in parts of London, Leeds / Bradford, and many major cities.
- Sikhs in many parts of the country but Southall has the largest population outside the Punjab.
- Hindus – many major cities, especially Leicester.
- Buddhists – variety of centres of be found in major cities, as well as monasteries, Samye Ling, Throssle Hole, etc.

Candidates may comment on ways in which some groups tended to be drawn to areas where there was already an established community, but as they settled, greater geographical spread has occurred.

For marks above Level 5 there needs to be some breadth of approach.

Needs to have some geographical reference for marks above Level 5.

Full marks can be given for good 'local' distribution, e.g. London.

**(30 marks)**

**AO1**

0
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2
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**‘The United Kingdom is no longer Christian.’ How far do you agree?**

**Agree**

- At the most obvious level – no longer solely a Christian country, because it is a multi-faith society.
- Significant decline in the practice of religion, including Christianity.
- Christianity no longer normative.
- Very much a minority who are practising members of the faith.
- May argue that Christian values no longer dominate society.
- Belief is at a low level.

**Disagree**

- Even though decline is evident, Britain is more Christian than anything else.
- Signs of growth in some parts of Christianity.
- Christianity remains the ‘default position’ for many people.
- In times of crisis people still turn to Christian ideas and practices.
- Overall culture still profoundly influenced by its Christian history.

Better answers may deal with the question of how Christian Britain ever really was – although this debate would certainly not be expected at this level. May also consider what is meant by describing any country as ‘Christian’.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**

**Question 2 Expressions of religion within society****0****3**

**Examine the various types and roles of religious leaders in the United Kingdom today.**

This may be answered in depth or breadth, but for the highest levels, there should be some range covered, even if the answer is from the perspective of only one religion.

The approach may be by religion or by classification of types and roles of leadership.

**Types**

Formal functionaries of religion:

- e.g. Christian clergy, priests, ministers, etc.
- Rabbis.
- Some reference may be made to hierarchical structures, archbishops, moderators, etc.
- As well as to offices such as that of Chief Rabbi.

Leadership through scholarship / expertise:

- e.g. rabbis, imams

Leadership through committee / council structures:

- e.g. Church councils
  - Gurdwara Committees
- etc.

Lay leadership in many forms:

- e.g. pastoral and preaching leadership within Christian Churches, including in some cases leading the sacraments.
- The granthi in the Gurdwara.

May refer to political authority and leadership, e.g. by religious leaders having seats in House of Lords.

Candidates may also refer to charismatic v. Institutional forms of leadership.

**Roles**

- e.g. Christian priests and ministers.
- Sacramental, preaching, pastoral administrative: some may comment on titles.
- Rabbis: legal, teaching, etc.
- Hinduism: role of priests and teachers, etc.
- Candidates may comment on differing emphasis on different roles in different branches of the same faith.

For marks above Level 5 both types and roles must be addressed.

**(30 marks)****AO1**

0

4

**‘Religious leaders have no importance outside their faith communities.’**

**Assess how far you agree.**

**Agree**

- Logically true: they are leaders within the faith community
- The basis of their authority lies in a belief system – and so cannot have relevance to those who do not share that belief system
- May also be said that the authority is local or congregational, and so the authority of one leader does not spread to those outside the immediate community, even if they share the same faith.

**Disagree**

- For some there is a widespread implied authority
- They may be recognised as respected figures, even though people do not share their belief systems
- Especially, in Britain, among Christian clergy, at least of some denominations
- Figures with hierarchical / national status, e.g. Archbishop of Canterbury, Chief Rabbi, etc. – speaking out on national issues.

Better answers may also be able to indicate ways in which even within faith communities, there may be some reluctance to accept traditional forms of leadership and authority.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**

**Question 3 Issues of identity and belonging**

0

5

**Examine ways in which dress and dietary rules affect the lives of individuals, with reference to one or more religion(s).**

**Most likely examples have been outlined here but others may be included**

**Dress****Judaism** for Orthodox and Hasidim

## Men

- Traditional east European dress
- Kippah and hat
- Tzitzit (fringes)

## Women

- Head covering or wig
- Conservative 'modest' clothing (long skirts long sleeves)

**Islam**

## Men

- Many choose to adopt traditional white garments though not required
- Topi
- Beard

## Women

- Covering of body
- Hijab
- Niqab

**Sikhism**

Men and women – Panj Kakke

**Dietary**

**Judaism** – kosher and kashrut

**Islam** – halal

**Buddhism, Hinduism** – vegetarian

**Affect the lives of individuals** – candidates should be able to comment on the implications of observing these rules, and the extent to which they may be observed.

The question asks for one or more. If only one religion is dealt with, then greater depth expected.

Maximum top Level 5 if only one of dress or diet dealt with, however well.

Maximum Level 5 if affects the lives of individuals is not dealt with.

**(30 marks)**

**AO1**



0
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6
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**‘Dress and dietary practices are essential to maintaining the identity of a faith community.’ Assess this claim.**

**Agree**

- May draw parallels with a range of secular examples;
- They help – dress makes people instantly recognisable, both to outsiders and to members of the faith community concerned.
- Give the group a visible presence within the wider community.
- Dress and diet provide a discipline for the member of the community which helps them to be aware of the beliefs and ethics of the group.

**Disagree**

- They are cultural rather than religious so irrelevant to religious identity.
- Not all within these faiths accept the need for these dress and dietary codes- many reject them in favour of more ‘westernised’ approaches.
- The inward rather than outward signs are the more important.
- Other religions, e.g. Christianity, can maintain religious identity without these practices, so cannot be intrinsically necessary.

Some may argue, for instance, that diet is essential whilst dress is not, or may argue the differing relative importance of particular aspects of dress or diet.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**

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**Question 4 An introduction to New Religious Movements (NRMs)**

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7
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**Explain the sociological definitions of both the sect and the cult.**

This may be approached in a variety of ways, either through sect / cult distinction as below or through models such as world rejecting, world affirming and world accommodating etc.

**Sect**

- Often a breakaway from an established group or movement.
- Division brought about by particular doctrinal issues.
- Relative deprivation theory.
- Sect characteristically inward looking.
- Close knit.
- Tight rules – with idea of exclusion for those who break them.
- Strict beliefs.
- Fundamentalist view of scripture.
- World affirming.
- And world rejecting.

**Cult**

- Shares many of the characteristics of the sect.
- Often centred round a charismatic leader.
- With personal following.
- When leader does / dies, the cult declines.
- Often communal / residential.
- Members give up jobs and families.

For marks above Level 4 exemplification is required.

Maximum top Level 5 if only one of these dealt with, however well (though watch for overlapping characteristics).

**(30 marks)****AO1**

0

8

**Assess how far these sociological definitions are helpful in understanding New Religious Movements.**

**Are helpful**

- Help to classify movements.
- Give a sense of characteristics.
- Help to show distinctions within a complex range of movements.
- Help to know what may be expected of different types of New Religious Movements.
- Help to understand why people may be attracted to them.
- Cults often seen as more dangerous than sects.

**Are not helpful**

- Each movement is individual and typologies can distort.
- Typologies based on 'ideal types' which rarely fit exactly.
- Distinctions between the two are often blurred.
- Process rather than static types – cult may develop into a sect and a sect into a denomination.
- New Religious Movements are very complex organisations and beliefs may be much more important.

**(15 marks)**

**AO2**