



**General Certificate of Education
June 2010**

Religious Studies

RSS10

World Religions 2

Christianity, Judaism or Islam 1 *The Way of Submission*

AS Unit K

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 candidates' 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 candidates' 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.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' 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 to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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	

RSS10: Section A *Christianity*

Question 1 Some beliefs about God: Trinity and salvation

0

1

Explain the beliefs about God in the Christian creeds.

Candidates might include some of the following points:

- One but in three persons who revealed himself to the world.
- Father as originator or creator.
- Old Testament creator and sustainer.
- God is incarnate as the human being Jesus.
- In the Apostles' Creed God is Father Almighty, creator of Heaven and Earth, has a son Jesus who is now seated at God's right hand.
- Nicene Creed states that the son is neither begotten nor made; of one substance with the Father; incarnate; crucified, buried; rose; ascended; will come again.
- Holy Spirit: proceeds from Father (and the son) etc.

(30 marks)**AO1**

0

2

'Despite a belief in the Trinity, Christianity is clearly monotheistic.'
Assess this claim.

In support of the claim, candidates might offer some of the following points:

- Creed speaks of Jesus as God.
- Importance of Jesus as God incarnate, not as a separate being.
- Son of God; implications of special relationship with God but also suggesting the divinity of Jesus as God on earth.
- There are implications of the titles within the context of the Trinity, but in no way is there any suggestion that Christianity is not monotheistic.
- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity but is God working in the world today, not as a separate person.

Against the claim, candidates might offer some of the following points:

- There are three persons in the Trinity clearly suggesting polytheism.
- Jesus is the Son of God; implications of special relationship with God but as a separate being.
- The Creeds speak of God as Father.

(15 marks)**AO2**

Question 2 Christian scriptures: nature and purpose

0	3
----------	----------

Examine the belief that the Christian scriptures are the word of God.

Candidates might offer some of the following points to explain Christian scriptures **as the word of God**:

- God guided the writers to write down his will, word for word. The Bible is therefore without error.
- It is a record of the way God gradually made himself known more closely to people so revealed his actual will as people could understand it.
- All the ideas and thoughts in the Bible are divinely inspired.
- The Bible carries absolute authority for some Christians because it is the 'word of God'.
- It is one source of authority for Christians along with the Church and individual conscience, tradition, reason and experience but is special because it is the absolute word of God.

Candidates might offer some of the following points to **explain Christian scriptures in other ways**:

- As God only guided the writers of scripture, it can only be an interpretation of what he wills, etc.
- The phrase 'word of God' means different things to different people and should not be taken literally.
- Roman Catholics suggesting that the Church has the right to decide the correct interpretation of the Bible suggests to some that it is not necessarily the absolute word of God.
- Some of the biblical ideas seem inconsistent to some, suggesting that it cannot be the absolute word of God.
- God really speaks through great ideas and should not be seen too literally.
- Christians have to interpret the Bible in the modern world and if it was God's absolute word, he would not allow for interpretation.

(30 marks) AO1

0	4
----------	----------

To what extent do Christian scriptures have authority for Christians today?

Candidates could include some of the following points:

Has authority:

- They have a special place for Christians because they are so important.
- They are divinely inspired so what else is of authority?
- The message of the Bible is the same today as it has always been, the teachings are eternal.
- The principles in the Christian scriptures are valid and applicable for all times and in all ages.

Does not have authority:

- The Church is as important an authority for some Christians.
- Individual conscience based on Christianity generally carries as much authority.
- Many of the problems and issues faced by Christians today were not around in the times the Christian scriptures were originally written so another authority is required.
- They do not contain absolute authority for some Christians which may make them to turn to other sources in times of need.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 3 Aspects of Christian worship**0****5****Examine the differences between public and private worship in Christianity.**

Candidates could cover any of the following points in their consideration of **public worship**:

Prayer

Formal and liturgical
 Extempore (spur of the moment)
 Silent
 Intercessory
 Spontaneous.

Formal Liturgy

Usually focused on priestly action, often involving Eucharist / mass or daily offices
 Priest leading, people making formal responses
 Other ways of celebrating the Eucharist, with emphasis on fellowship.

Praise

Hymn singing
 Role of music, variety of forms
 Spontaneous response.

Preaching / Teaching

Bible readings
 Sermons
 Testimony
 Children's activities.

Charismatic activity

Blessings
 Laying on of hands
 Glossolalia, (speaking in a different, often previously unknown, language),
 etc.

Candidates could consider some of the following in **private worship**:

- Many Christians will spend some time during the week studying and reading the Bible or other books about Christianity and Christian belief as their form of worship. They will do this to learn more about their faith and to deepen and strengthen their faith.
- Private worship is worship given to God by one person (or family) while alone.
- The most common ways for a person to worship privately is by praying or reading the scriptures. May include liturgical forms, such as daily offices.
- Most private worship is conducted in the home and may include a whole family.
- Jesus found times to go to a private place where he could be alone and pray to God (Matthew 14²³; Luke 6¹²). When Paul and Silas were put in prison, they sang and prayed to God at midnight (Acts 16²⁵).
- While one must worship with the church, one also can worship privately.
- Private worship can help a Christian feel close to God every day of the week. One way is by thanking God.

Maximum Level 5 if both public and private not included.

(30 marks)**AO1**

0	6
---	---

'In Christianity, public worship is more important than private worship.'

Assess this claim.

In support of the statement

- Central aspect of the Christian faith.
- Christians can gather together with other believers.
- Members of a congregation take part in the act which gives them a place in Christian worship.
- Enables them to express and declare their faith.
- Inspire and strengthen them in their daily lives.
- Christian belief cannot be separated out from corporate worship.
- Role of sacraments.

Against the statement

- Most Christian worship is addressed to God and only in private can you express a faith.
- Christians find their closest experience of God through private worship.
- God is a personal God not a God of corporate worship.
- Contemplation is arguably the oldest form of worship for Christians.
- Saying the Lord's Prayer as a form of worship in private takes precedence over all other forms of worship.
- Best way to gain inner strength and inspiration.

(15 marks)

AO2

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

0

7

Explain the beliefs and practices associated with confirmation.

Candidates might cover some of the following:

Beliefs

- In the early days of the church when infant baptism became widespread, it became necessary to have a later service which would confirm the undertakings made in baptism.
- Relate to beliefs about baptism.
- The person being confirmed is of an age when he or she is able to understand the promises.
- Acknowledgement that in Christianity there is not one set ceremony in which a person shows commitment to a faith so candidates can choose any they have been taught or are familiar with.
- The word 'confirm' means to establish more firmly and this could describe the purpose of a ceremony of confirmation.
- The hope that a person committing themselves will become more firmly established as a follower of Jesus.

Practices

- There is no set age for confirmation.
- Classes are normally held by a vicar or minister.
- Boys and girls sometimes wear white for the ceremony.
- Taken by a Bishop in Episcopal churches.
- Hymns and prayers are used as the service progresses.
- The address reminding those being confirmed of the way of life they were committing to.
- Questions such as 'Do you turn to Christ?', 'Do you repent of your sins?' and 'Do you renounce evil?' are asked.
- The confirmant receives the Holy Communion.

If only **one** of beliefs and practices is dealt with, award maximum Level 5.**(30 marks)****AO1**

0

8

‘Confirmation is the most important way of marking commitment to the Christian faith.’ Assess this view.

In support of the statement

- A person is old enough to make the commitment themselves.
- Baptism is too early and therefore meaningless to the baby.
- Unless the parents are serious in their intention to bring up the child as a Christian as they promised during a Baptism service, there could be more harm than good done and therefore better to wait until confirmation.
- If a ceremony of commitment happens too early, people encouraged to make light of a sacrament that should have great significance.
- Service of confirmation is more appropriate and valuable.
- No intention of keeping the promises made unless done so at the appropriate age.
- Questionable as to whether the New Testament supports the baptism of infants so confirmation is much more sound biblically.

Against the statement

- Beliefs about original sin mean that a Baptism or earlier service of commitment is important.
- Baptism is clearly more important because it is a preparation for later confirmation.
- Welcoming child into family of the Church which is too late if left until a confirmation ceremony.
- A naming ceremony has much more religious significance than any later ceremony of commitment.
- Promises made on behalf of baby are important early on in the life of a Christian.
- Showing commitment in everyday life is more important than a particular ceremony.

(15 marks) AO2

Section B *Judaism*

Question 5 God and his people

0

9

Explain challenges to the traditional Jewish ideas about God in the 21st century.

Candidates may say something about the **nature of God** first.

- Monotheism
- God who acts in history
- God who is just
- God who cares for his people / special relationship with chosen people
- Omnipotence, Omniscience, etc.
- Covenant God.

Candidates might offer some of the following points:

- Whether the idea of God is acceptable.
- Whether Jews can see God in history.
- Can God be just with people dying young, etc.
- Is concept like omnipotence possible?
- May have reference to Holocaust issues.
- Issues such as a Just God are a problem for Jews in the 21st century when so much injustice seems to exist.
- Candidates might argue that for Orthodox Jews, traditional ideas about God are the most important but less so for Reform Jews, and then for secular (Romantic) Judaism relationship with God is irrelevant.
- Suggestion that evil and problems for Jews challenge the covenant relationship idea.

Maximum Level 4 if candidates do not talk about the challenges.

(30 marks)

AO1

1

0

'Jews today cannot believe that God is all-loving.' Evaluate this claim.

In support of the statement

- Idea that God will use history to achieve his objective for the people and this may not seem all-loving
- Idea of God working through history is fine except for the price Jews seem to have to pay, e.g. the Holocaust.
- God is seen as pro-active within the world today (which may include State of Israel) but God causes a great deal of suffering.
- Some see the idea of God in control and this may show his power but not his love.

Against the statement:

- God's character as expressed through the covenant does not change through time.
- Out of the suffering of the Holocaust, Jews in the 21st century will be a better people.
- Jews' 'election' by God is still the dominant theme in the 21st century.
- The continued train of tradition of the Jewish faith ultimately shows that God loves his people.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 6 Scripture

1	1
----------	----------

Explain Jewish views about the authority of scripture.

Candidates might cover some of the following:

- They could probably show how there are different types of scripture for Orthodox Jews – the Torah, the Nevi'im and the Ketuvim.
- Examples might be the Torah as the absolute word of God, never translated, treated with special respect in synagogue, hand-written, etc.
- The Talmud is seen as the centre for scholarly discussion and teaching.
- Equally, the Talmud with its divisions – each aspect treated rather differently:
- For example, Orthodox Jews see large sections as the absolute word of God and thus cannot be changed.
- Candidates might discuss the issue over whether scriptures are God's final and complete revelation or not.
- Progressive Jews may believe that the authority of scripture is in itself progressive.

(30 marks)

1	2
----------	----------

'Jewish beliefs about scripture hold back the development of worship in Judaism today.' Assess this claim.

Candidates might want to focus upon different styles of Judaism and relate them to the different ideas about the scriptures:

- Liberal Jews would see much of scripture as man recording God's actions and thus can move on from them.
- There may be consideration about how Jews relate to the world around them and whether even most Orthodox allow for change in Jews' views and adaptation to different circumstances.
- Candidates could give examples such as how Jews cope with the loss of the Temple.
- Traditional beliefs mean that worship cannot be progressive.
- Torah is read in Hebrew and cannot develop worship because it cannot be in another language.
- What is said from the Tenak may not be relevant but is still said in worship.
- Worship is of the heart so could be argued that it can never be held back by anything.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 7 Aspects of worship and festivals: Shabbat, Yom Kippur and Pesach**1****3****Explain the role of men, including the rabbi and the cantor, in Jewish worship.**

Candidates will probably focus on the two main strands of the question, but anything on the role of men in worship should be credited, i.e. in prayer, in Shabbat, the gabbai or synagogue warden, the shamash (servant) in the synagogue, as well as other synagogue workers relevant to the worship such as the scribe, and the mohel.

Candidates might offer some of the following on the **rabbi**:

- Leads the prayers.
- Reads the weekly sidra (Torah portion).
- Conducts weddings and funerals.
- To take part in the Sabbath worship.
- Read from the Torah (In Hebrew) and to deliver a sermon on part of the Torah.
- To educate members of the community during the services in the traditions and the beliefs of Jews.
- To visit the members of the community who are sick or unable to attend the synagogue and perform acts of worship.
- A rabbi may also act as the Jewish "chaplain" to the local hospital, college or prison and perform a service.
- Rules on questions that come up during a service.
- Conducts morning prayers at congregational members' houses.

Candidates might offer some of the following on the **cantor**:

- Or Chazzan leads congregation in prayer.
- Chants certain parts of the prayers on Shabbat.
- Chants certain parts of the prayers during festivals.
- Can lead the service alone but sometimes has a choir with him.
- Assists the rabbi at weddings and funerals and memorial services.
- Teaches young people during the services to lead all or part of Shabbat.
- Chants Torah or Haftarah readings.

Maximum Level 5 if rabbi and cantor not specifically discussed.

(30 marks)**AO1**

1

4

‘The role of Jewish men is vital for the survival of Jewish worship.’

Assess this claim.

In support of the statement

- Abraham prayed and Jewish men are doing likewise so this is a vital part of Judaism.
- Many parts of Jewish services require the presence of ten Jewish men over the age of 13 (minyan).
- Certain parts of the worship are omitted if there are not ten Jewish men.
- The tallit and the tefillin are worn by Orthodox Jewish men and is a central practice of worship.
- The daily wearing of these items at worship is a constant reminder that the men must wear the sacred objects to keep the faith supported and alive in the modern world.
- Orthodox rabbis and cantors keep the traditions alive.

Against the statement

- Reform Judaism suggests that Judaism has to be adapted to suit modern conditions; this includes worship and it still survives.
- Services changed to gain prestige and Reform has a large following today without the need for the central role men play.
- In early days some Reform thinkers changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, men prayed bare headed and circumcision was discontinued, yet Jewish worship in many forms survived.
- Men and women sit together in Reform services, women carry the Torah scrolls and recite blessings. Some have women rabbis to continue the worship.

(15 marks)

AO2

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

1

5

Examine the key differences in beliefs between Orthodox and Reform Jews.**Beliefs**

- Beliefs are focused around different ideas about revelation and whether scripture and Moses can be seen as the final revelation from God or not.
- Reform would argue that it is not the final and complete revelation and thus Judaism can continue to grow and develop, if necessary away from the revelation, whereas Orthodox see the Sinai events as a final revelation.
- Orthodox see their practices as rooted in the revelation. Thus they must adhere to scripture and tradition.
- Differences in practice stem from the above.
- View of scripture (Orthodox God given, Reform man expressed).
- View of Judaism (Reform evolving, Orthodox fixed).
- The central dispute was about scripture. Was the Torah the absolute word of God of God
- Equally what authority is to be credited to the Talmud?
- Reformers argued for less and thus they were able to look at progress and reform within Judaism, whilst those that opposed did not accept any of the changes which arose from this approach, e.g. women rabbis / women forming a minyan.
- 'Who is a Jew?' debate.
- Beliefs can be expressed and identified within certain Jewish practices, e.g. many Reform Jews have abandoned the kosher food regulations.

(30 marks)**AO1**

1

6

'It is the similarities in beliefs that unite Orthodox and Reform Jews.'**Assess this claim.****In support of the statement**

- The nature of God is a consistent belief shared by Orthodox and Reform.
- Centre of Jewish devotion is the home.
- Place of the synagogue has an importance for both branches of Judaism.
- Significance of Shema for both.
- Celebration of festivals.

Against the statement

- For Reform Jews it is the spirit of the Torah that matters, for Orthodox, there is the belief in the ultimate authority of the Torah.
- Shabbat and festivals are kept in a more informal way in Reform homes but following similar traditions.
- Belief less important than practice in Judaism.
- Racial identity more important than belief or practice.
- Common ancestry, tradition, history, culture.
- Same Torah

(15 marks)**AO2**

Section C *Islam 1 The Way of Submission*

Question 9 The Qur'an

1	7	Explain Muslim beliefs about the revelation of the Qur'an.
---	---	---

Candidates might offer some of the following points:

- A voice spoke to Muhammad as he was in a cave on Mount Hira just outside Makkah.
- The voice told Muhammad to 'recite'. Some accounts suggest 'read'.
- Three times the voice gave the command and Muhammad then realised the words were being given to him and he opened his mouth and recited.
- The voice was that of the Angel Jibril calling his name.
- This event is classed as the night of power.
- Khadijah, Muhammad's wife believed in the words and urged him to revisit the cave where he continued to pray for guidance on what he was being told.
- Jibril appeared again and Muhammad was ordered to preach the revelations Allah had given him.
- Muhammad received these revelations over a period of 23 years.
- His friends wrote down his words and believed it to be the exact words of Allah.
- Literal revelation of actual words.

NB Accept a contemporary approach to the question.

(30 marks) AO1

1	8	'The guidance given in the Qur'an was relevant only for the time and place it was given.' Assess this view.
---	---	--

In support of the statement

- The Qur'an was given to Muhammad in a very different religious and moral time to today.
- The warnings to people of God's judgement have little place in the 21st century.
- The short poetical sections, whilst of great beauty, hold little guidance for Muslims today.
- Many of the teachings Muhammad received which are in the Qur'an have to do with matters of law at the time such as inheritance rights, usury and the conduct of business affairs.
- No need for consensus / scholars view if not relevant today.

Against the statement

- The Qur'an offers much on public and private prayer, personal contemplation, religious, social, moral guidance, use as talisman, in education. Reflection on nature of God, signs of God within creation, use by Sufis, source of law, history, teaching about Islam that is still of worth and value today.
- The Qur'an has much on doctrinal statements and how to keep the Pillars of Faith.
- It tells of how Governments should treat their subjects and other states.
- Imams still use the Qur'an as a basis for their sermons in the mosque.
- Life is ibadah and the Qur'an guides Muslims on the straight path.
- The meditations in the Qur'an can enable a Muslim to come closer to God.
- It is regarded as unique in its nature and authority.
- Use in madrassah to show importance of learning verses in Arabic as sacred language.

(15 marks) AO2

Question 10 The Five Pillars

1

9

Explain the significance of the Five Pillars for Muslims.

Candidates might offer some of the following:

- They are a Muslim's declaration of faith.
- They are the basis of the Islamic faith.
- They prove belief in Islam.
- They underscore the communal character of Islam.
- They establish a way of Islamic life.
- They remind Muslims of their love of God.
- They remind Muslims of their dedication to God.
- They establish a sense of law and order for Muslims.
- They offer hope for salvation from following them.

Maximum Level 4 for descriptive accounts that do not address significance.

(30 marks)**AO1**

2

0

'For Muslims, the act of worship is more important than the intention (niyyah).'
Assess this view.**In support of the statement**

- Worship for Muslims is based on the feeling that they are not as perfect as they would like to be so the act of worship is very important.
- There can be nothing better than turning to God in worship in reverence, submission and wonder (Ibadah is vital).
- Pure worship has to be free of the three sins and the Hadith offers the value of worship for Muslims, 'You should worship Allah as if you are seeing Him...God does not accept beliefs if they are not expressed in deeds...'
- When faith enters the heart during worship, it causes the best of all mental states.
- Submission to God in worship is not passive, but a positive act; therefore whenever an act of worship is done, it is to please God.

Against the statement

- Muslims believe that your intentions – niyyah – are vital.
- People are not all saints and Muslims believe that God judges people by their intentions so it has to be a vital part of Islam.
- You cannot perform an act of worship without the right intention in your heart.
- Performing the worship of the Five Pillars has to be done with niyyah or it becomes worthless.
- Submission to the will of God needs a Muslim to show the right intention and this is more important than any act of worship.

(15 marks)**AO2**

Question 11 The doctrine of God

2

1

Explain the Muslim concept of God as lawgiver and judge.

Candidates might offer some of the following:

- Muslims believe one is accountable to God for one's actions and will be judged on Judgment Day when one's deeds are weighed in the balance.
- Muslims believe that part of God's power is his judgment and mercy.
- God has given the Qur'an as guidance and Muhammad as the exemplary prophet.
- In Islam, one is responsible to God; one's intent is known and deeds are recorded.
- One's duty is to live life in submission and worship God, being aware of the needs of others. One will stand naked before God on Judgment Day and the Qur'an clearly depicts reward and punishment.
- To be judged favourably one should put God first, act on faith, practice four active pillars and obey Shari'a law.
- Reference to the Day of Judgment may be made.

Both elements should be included in answers for Level 6 and above.

(30 marks)

AO1

2

2

'It is impossible for Muslims to describe God.' Assess this claim.

In support of the statement

- God exists outside of time and creation for Muslims so is impossible to describe.
- He is regarded as beyond human knowledge and reasoning.
- Muslims argue that it is impossible to describe God in human terms.
- God is beyond the world of descriptive matter.
- Muslims cannot liken a prophet to God and he has no equal or partner so very difficult to describe.
- Surah 6 describes how Allah is above all comprehension.

Against the statement

- Muslims have 99 beautiful names for Allah suggesting description.
- Muslims do describe Allah through qualities such as judge, loving, just, supreme and forgiving.
- Tawhid or the oneness of God suggests description.
- Surah 112 describes attributes of Allah.
- From the example of Muhammad who received the Qur'an on Mount Hira, he had knowledge of what God was like and so too can Muslims today.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 12 Key beliefs**2****3****Explain Muslim beliefs about the nature and role of angels.**

Candidates might offer some of the following points:

Nature

- Besides visible creations, Muslims believe there are other invisible forces in the universe that affect human behaviour.
- They do not have free will.
- Angels are made of light.
- The presence of angels can be felt in prayer or contemplation of God as peace, love and worship.
- Generally they cannot be seen, except by very special people or at times of crisis.
- Angels can take on many forms.
- The Angel Jibril (Gabriel) was seen in human form by Abraham and Mary.
- According to the Hadith, Muhammad saw Jibril as an enormous creature with thousands of wings.
- The Qur'an makes frequent reference to the Devil, Iblis.
- Angels were created before humans.
- There are other named angels in the Qur'an such as Azra'il (who receives the souls of the dead), Mika'il (who protects the faithful and places of worship), and Iblis (the devil, or Shatan / Satan).
- Munker and Nakir (who question souls at judgment) and Israfil (who calls the souls of the dead at the Last Judgement) are popular in tradition but not actually mentioned in the Qur'an.

Role

- Angels are mala'ika or messengers.
- Their role is to carry out God's will.
- They also have a role to convey his message to humans.
- Angels are there to record all individual deeds.
- According to the Qur'an, each person has two angels who write down everything that person says in the Record, and who act as guardian angels, offering guidance in preparation for Last Judgement, 'Yet you deny the Last Judgement. Surely there are guardians watching over you, noble recorders who know your actions,' (82:9).

Maximum Level 5 if answer does not include both nature and role, though they may be interwoven rather than treated separately.

(30 marks)**AO1**

2

4

To what extent is it unreasonable for Muslims to believe in angels today?

In support of the statement

- Teaching on reward and punishment is not overtly emphasised in daily life so no need to believe in the place of angels.
- Some Muslims may view angels as symbolic or more relevant to the audience who first heard the message from the angels.
- Daily life overtakes spiritual concerns and Muslims have other priorities today rather than a belief seemingly in the supernatural.
- If one focuses on a belief in the angels, one could neglect other responsibilities.
- God knows one's destiny, one cannot alter it so no requirement to believe in angels.
- Angels are heavenly beings who were created of light by God; they are sexless, sinless and immortal. They have no free will. This is an unreasonable belief.

Against the statement

- The Qur'an teaches that Muslims must live as God wants if they are to be rewarded after death; if they do not, they will be punished. This involves a belief in the angels.
- Islamic teaching on reward for believers and faithful servants emphasises nature of life after death as contrasting with life on earth, e.g. peace, tranquility, gardens with flowing rivers, maidens to serve every wish, eternal life. Belief in angels is a fundamental part of this.
- Punishment is graphically depicted as suited to those who disbelieve or reject God so why would it not be reasonable to believe in angels too?
- Some candidates may refer to the role of angels and how reasonable a belief in them is.
- Brief expansion of belief that angels are not human; they are sinless and guide Muslims in life. They have different functions. What is unreasonable about this?
- Israfil who is responsible for the Day of Judgement. Azrall who takes away last breath. Guardian angels act as guides. Recording angels note deeds in life. Iblis / Shayton - fallen angel, role is to tempt humans. All of this has been a part of a Muslims' belief for hundreds of years so cannot be unreasonable.

(15 marks)

AO2