



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

Religious Studies

RSS08

Religion and Contemporary Society

AS Unit H

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 students' 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 students' 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.

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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 20th century

0	1	Examine the evidence for a decline in Christianity in the UK during the 20th century.
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The question asks for 20th century, but credit will obviously be given for data relating to early years of 21st century.

Expect students to show some awareness of the various indices of religion (identification, attendance, membership, belief).

Plenty of evidence of decline in attendance and membership, e.g.:-

Tearfund report: Only 15% attend Church at least monthly; two thirds have no connection with Church at all.

Figures from 2011 BHA survey- 65% 'not religious'; 43% not in a place of worship in past year.

Decline in baptisms.

Work of Brierley et al – e.g. recent figures showing Church attendance dropping by nearly 2 million between 1990 and 2010, rising percentage of Church attendees who are over 65.

More obvious visible signs of decline through derelict churches, or former churches being used as shops, bars, housing developments etc.

Of those which are in use, many half empty, or have very elderly congregations.

Decline of Sunday observance; Sunday trading etc.

Decline in vocations and ordinations in many Churches.

Some may talk of decline in terms of decline as Christian values in terms of ethics and societal norms. This approach needs to be specific.

Some may equate the rise of non-Christian religions with the decline of Christianity. Be careful with this – the two do not equate.

NB This is about evidence. Debating the evidence is AO2, and cannot be credited.

(30 marks)

AO1

0

2

'The decline in Christianity in the UK has been so steep that there is no way back.' How far do you agree?

Agree

Use of evidence such as in 01.

May point to evidence of particular parts of the country where attendance and participation are particularly low.

Or particular age groups.

Some of Brierley's projections would point to total wipe-out of some major denominations in near future.

Disagree

There is always some way back.

'Believing without belonging' – just because people are not in active membership of Churches, does not mean that they do not believe, and there may be some return.

Evidence of sustained levels of belief in some ideas of the Christian God, so church may remain.

Christmas and Easter still observed on more than just a social/commercial level.

Tearfund report suggests that 1 in 4 attends church at least once a year, and that 22% of people in London go to church.

Rise in black led churches and some other Pentecostal groups.

Rise in Catholic attendance in areas of immigration from Eastern Europe.

Rise in new forms of church may mean that whilst traditional Sunday morning attendance is in decline, people are expressing their Christian involvement in other ways.

Expansion of faith schools, including many new Anglican and Catholic schools.

Answers at the highest levels are likely to be able to debate the 'steepness' of the decline, and the idea of the 'way back'.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 2 Expressions of religion within society

0

3

Examine how places of worship may be identified through their main features. You may refer to one or more religion(s) in your answer.

This is a wide ranging question, and it may be approached in a variety of ways. The idea of 'identification' is likely to mean a focus on external features though internal aspects may also be mentioned. Question may be approached in breadth or depth.

e.g.

Christianity: May focus on traditional architectural forms including shape and style, but important to recognise both the wide range of style from different historical periods, as well as the wide variety of styles of different denominations.

Symbolism of the cross, both traditionally in the shape of the building, and often found on the outside of the building; stained glass windows. Internal features, depending on denomination, may include altar, pulpit, font, etc. Icons and iconostasis within Orthodox Church.

The symbolism of domes, spires, towers, etc.

External signs and notice boards.

Allow for comment on the uses of 'non-distinctive' buildings as places of worship.

Judaism: Again, wide variety of styles; symbolism of star of David or menorah, but also, because of anti-Semitism, some bearing little external indication of their identity. Internally, ark, bimah, everlasting light (ner tamid) etc.

Islam: For purpose built mosques, minaret and dome. Many adapted from many other previous uses, so dependent on symbols (star and crescent moon). Internally, separate entrance for women, facilities for washing (wudu), mihrab, minbar, carpets, etc.

Hinduism: Mandirs in many shapes and forms; purpose built having traditional architecture, symbols. Internally, places for murtis and puja.

Sikhism: whatever the size or origin of the building, flag (nisan sahib) will be seen, otherwise khanda or ik onkar likely to be a visible symbol, Internally, lack of chairs or furnishings, centrality of Guru Granth Sahib, resting place for it when not in diwan hall, physical facilities for langar.

Some may talk about ideas of 'set apartness', or the relationship of the buildings to the wider community, structures surrounding them etc; some may refer to places of worship which are 'borrowed' in the sense that faith communities use school or community halls etc for their worship. May also refer to places which have fallen into disuse but whose original identity can clearly be seen.

The focus here is on 'may be identified' and L6 and L7 answers should have clear focus on this aspect.

The basic question is very accessible – look for some depth of understanding, in accordance with the levels.

(30 marks)

AO1

0

4

'Distinctive places of worship divide communities.'**How far do you agree?****Agree:**

The very distinctiveness is a constant reminder of the pluralism of society.
 Different places of worship can be seen as 'other' to those not of that faith.
 Giving those of different faith groups their own space and gathering place.
 Can provide a target for those who wish to attack particular groups.

Disagree:

Diversity to be celebrated.
 Just because there are different buildings does not mean that it causes tension.
 Having particular buildings helps people to be aware of each other and to understand.
 Many of the buildings are places where people can get to know more about the faith concerned, and the people involved, so they make a positive contribution to community understanding.

(15 marks)**AO2****Question 3 Issues of identity and belonging**

0

5

Explain how religious identity and cultural identity are related to each other.

Expect some definition of 'identity' – the ways in which people define themselves; the groups they belong to, the 'labels' they adopt; the barriers they put up.

Religious

At most basic level, what people will put in box marked 'religion' on forms.
 Religious groups with which they will associate – or keep separate from.
 Expressions of identity through dress, diet or symbols.
 Expressions of identity through family or career expectations or aspirations.
 Family lifestyles – and aspects of marriage.
 Ways in which they wish children to be brought up.

Cultural

Often related to the lifestyle of a particular country, but students may also consider sub-cultures within society.
 Expressions of that culture through dress, diet, lifestyle.
 Language.
 Marriage and family life.

Relationship

Essentially complex – practices which may be seen as religious are often cultural in origin and vice versa.
 Religious identity may reflect a cultural identity which has died out – e.g. Hasidic Jews and Eastern European culture.
 People may share more with others from the same culture that they recognise because of religious differences.
 Outsiders may not recognise the wide variety of cultural differences between those of the same religion.
 Tensions between those of the same faith but different culture.
 Or same culture and different faith.
 Answers need to deal with nature of religious and cultural identity and not just manifestations of these. Max L4 if not dealing with nature of these.
 Max L5 if relationship is not dealt with.

(30 marks)**AO1**

0

6

'It takes strong faith to maintain a religious identity in today's society.'
How far do you agree?

Agree

Faith is important to helping people to overcome all sorts of difficulties.
Gives determination not to be swayed to conform.
Faith and identity may be interlinked, and help each other; people may say that they find it easier to maintain their faith if, for instance, they dress in a certain way.

Disagree

For some the social group may give the impetus.
Or the desire to stand out from the crowd.
Faith is of the heart whereas the symbols of identity may be seen as 'externals'.
People may have deep faith without any use of these.
May use points from 05 to argue that the maintenance of identity is more cultural than religious.

(15 marks)

AO2

Question 4 An introduction to New Religious Movements (NRMs)

0

7

Examine the meanings of the terms 'sect' and 'cult' as applied by sociologists to the study of New Religious Movements.

Sect

Small, tight knit group, usually inward looking.
Often an offshoot of mainstream – often breaking off for doctrinal reasons or over issues of authority.
Strict rules – exclusion for those who break them.
Fundamentalist view of scripture.
Often with strong eschatological views; millenarian.
Various classifications, e.g.:
World affirming/World rejecting/World accommodating
Revolutionist/ introversionist/ manipulationist
Natural evolution into denomination.

Cult

Shares many of the characteristics of the sect, though may be more extreme.
Inward looking.
May be less likely than sect to be clearly related to mainstream denomination.
Often centred round charismatic leader, and members are his personal followers.
Movement may end with the death of this leader.
Often communal/residential.
Members give up jobs and families, and may not be allowed to see families.

For marks of L5 and above, there needs to be clear exemplification
If both sect and cult not dealt with, then max L5, however well done

Students need to be able to distinguish 'sect' and 'cult'. If the two are conflated – Max Level 4.

(30 marks)

AO1

0

8

'Sects have had greater impact than cults.'**Assess this claim.****Agree**

Sects tend to be longer lived, especially as they are likely to evolve into more established denominations.

Some sects work within society, and can therefore have an impact on it.

Their preaching often leads to reform within the mainstream.

Sects may remain as sects, but still have break off groups from them, which may affect their impact.

Disagree

Cults have more impact because of their 'shock tactics' and headline hitting events.

Cults may have much more impact on the lives of individuals because of the totality of the experience.

BUT May argue that cannot generalise about either type, because there is so much diversity within them; may consider relative impact of world rejecting v world affirming groups.

(15 marks)**AO2**

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion