
A-LEVEL

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RST3D Old Testament
Mark scheme

2060
June 2014

Version: 1.0 Final

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.

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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**Question 1 Ways of reading the Old Testament**

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| 0 | 1 | Examine ways in which people understand the Old Testament and its authority. |
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This question may be approached in a variety of ways. Reference to 'people' may include, for example, Jews, Christians, feminists, fundamentalists and non-religious.

Jews

Canon is that of the Hebrew Tenakh with its threefold division.

The Torah is the most important part of the Scriptures – the rest of the Tenakh is a kind of commentary on it.

The Torah as interpreted by the Talmud informs rabbinic debate on modern issues.

This means that the authority of the Torah is higher than that of the Nevi'im and Ketuvim, though the rest of the Tenakh is important in Jewish practice.

The Septuagint translation contains additional books. These are seen as useful but do not hold the same authority as the Tenakh as a whole and the Torah in particular.

Christians

The contents of the Tenakh are found in the Christian Old Testament, albeit in the order of the Septuagint.

Protestants view those books that they term the Apocrypha as non-canonical.

Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians accept them as part of the authoritative canon of Scripture, terming them deuterocanonical.

Many Christians view these extra books as having only limited importance.

Belief of some that the Old Testament (the old covenant) was fulfilled in and superseded by the New Testament (the new covenant) and this means it is incomplete on its own and has limited authority.

For some, its value lies in its interpretation by the New Testament.

Not all books are of equal value from a Christian viewpoint.

The most important for many are the prophetic writings that are seen as foretelling Jesus' life, death and resurrection – e.g. the Servant poems in Isaiah.

The pre-exilic prophets also have authority because of their ethical content.

The Decalogue is valued and the Exodus is seen by some as pre-figuring Christ's act of redemption but much of the Pentateuch is disregarded, e.g. the ritual laws.

Approaches to biblical criticism

Fundamentalist approaches see the whole of the Torah as given by God to Moses and so has binding authority – this makes much modern biblical criticism irrelevant.

Literalist/fundamentalist Christians view Gen. 1, 2 as an inerrant / scientific account of the origins of the universe and of the Fall as the origin of sin and suffering.

Those who see the Tenakh / Old Testament as either God's word mediated through fallible human beings or as essentially a human product accept modern biblical criticism as giving insight into the date / possible purposes of individual books within the canon – this might affect their views on their authority.

Many adopt a variety of critical approaches – e.g. the importance of Gen.1-3 lies in its meaning as myth, in its value as a skilfully written story or in its capacity to draw a response from the reader.

Feminist approaches

The Tenakh / Old Testament was created in and has been interpreted by a patriarchal society.

Mary Daley views its contents as highly misogynist and rejects its authority totally. Phyllis Tribble and Rosemary Radford Ruether see some positive representations of women in the text, which carries some authority providing it is interpreted correctly.

[30 marks] AO1

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‘The differences between the approaches of Jews and Christians to the Old Testament are not important.’ Assess this view.

Agree

Many of the differences are simply structural, i.e. the organisation of the canon, and these are unimportant.

There are differences of opinion in Judaism on the significance of the ritual laws, and so some Jews would not be concerned about the rejection of these by Christians.

The fact that Jews and Christians engage in dialogue in so many aspects of life and belief suggests that differences in approaches to the Old Testament are not of ultimate significance.

Some people, e.g. feminists and those who are atheist / agnostic, would view as totally irrelevant the differences in approach of Jews and Christians.

Other views

For many Jews, the ritual laws are absolutely binding and so the rejection of them, whether by Jews or Christians, is a threat to the purity of the faith and a rejection of God’s commands.

The view of some Christians that the Old Testament’s authority is totally dependent on its interpretation by the New Testament / that it prefigures the life, death and resurrection of Christ marks a significant difference of approach.

For many Christians, the Old Testament is precisely that. It has been superseded by the New Testament and its authority is secondary. This conflicts absolutely with Jewish understanding.

These are fundamental differences in approach and mean that the potential for meaningful dialogue on the authority of the Jewish Scriptures / Old Testament is restricted. Christians cannot really appreciate / contribute to Jewish understanding and vice versa.

[20 marks] AO2

Question 2 God and humanity**0****3**

Examine views found in the narrative of the burning bush and in the psalms you have studied about:

- **the nature of God**
- **God's relationship to the world.**

The nature of God and of his relationship to the world in the narrative of the burning bush

The holiness of God – ‘the angel of the Lord’ an attempt to avoid anthropomorphism, Moses removes his sandals and hides his face.

The power of God over nature and the course of history – the burning bush that was not consumed, his intention to deliver the Israelites from oppression and the absolute assurance that this will be achieved.

God's omniscience – he knows what is happening in Egypt.

God's compassion – his concern about the slaves' suffering.

God the saviour – intending to liberate the slaves.

His concern is purely for the Israelites – they are ‘my people’ and they will be set free from Egypt and be settled in Canaan.

The nature of God and of his relationship to the world in the psalms

Psalm 8 a celebration of God's majesty and transcendence as seen in his creation.

Psalm 104 also celebrates God's majesty and transcendence both as creator and sustainer, controlling the forces of nature in orderly fashion.

Celebrates his care for the whole of creation – providing for animals as well as humans.

Psalm 105 celebrates God's power as Lord of creation and of history.

God the saviour – rescuing Israel from slavery, providing for them in the wilderness and giving them Canaan, thus showing his faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant.

Psalm 8 portrays God as giving humans supremacy over the animal creation – his concern is primarily for them and it is a concern for all humanity, not singling out the Jews.

Psalm 104 sees God's relationship with humanity as just part of his relationship with the world as a whole – he ensures that there is order and harmony in the world, he provides for the needs of all creatures.

Psalm 105 portrays God's relationship with the world as determined by his covenant relationship with Israel – he uses the forces of nature and the other nations to achieve his purposes for Israel.

Maximum level 5 if one of the four required elements is missing.

Maximum level 4 if two of the four are missing.

Better answers might use the insights of biblical criticism in their examination of the texts and the themes. Although reference to material outside the set texts is not expected, credit should be given to the appropriate use of Exodus 3¹³ – 4¹⁷ (e.g. a consideration of v14) or to other psalms.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

4

To what extent might these views on God's relationship with the world have relevance in the 21st century?

Some relevance

For many Jews, the views of God's covenant relationship with his chosen people are as relevant as ever.

The views found in the psalms of God's providential care for his world as a whole remind humans that they are not the only species with whom God has a relationship, and that their powers are to be used in terms of stewardship rather than domination. Their continuing relevance is to be seen in the Jewish and Christian Assisi Declarations and in the growth of environmental groups within both Judaism and Christianity, e.g. the Big Green Jewish website and Arocha.

The idea of God imposing order on the world fits in with traditional scientific interpretations of the Big Bang and its aftermath and with aspects of Gaia theory.

The idea of human responsibility rather than abuse of power is relevant also to those of other faiths and to secular thought.

Members of some other faith communities also accept the link between God as the creator of order and scientific theories.

Little or no relevance

The texts belong to an era and a culture whose whole way of thinking is alien to ours, so any statements they make about God's relationship with the world will make little sense. The thinking of the 21st century is predominantly secular, so for many people any reference to God is meaningless.

For some religious believers, their environmental concerns are more pragmatically based.

Interventionist ideas of God's relationship with the world are outdated and inappropriate. The concept of God's relationship with the world as one in which he imposes order and harmony conflicts with modern thinking and particularly with evolutionary theory.

[20 marks]

AO2

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

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Examine the guidance on right living given in the Law.

Different types of law in the set texts (apodictic and casuistic) – possible differences in the nature of the guidance given.

The Decalogue and Book of the Covenant indicate that right living relates to inner attitudes, religious practice, relationships with others in the family and community and attitudes to animals.

The importance of a right relationship with God as set out in first three Commandments. Good family relationships seen in respect for parents.

Avoidance of socially destructive behaviour – e.g. murder, theft, sexual offences, kidnap.

Satisfaction with what one has – not coveting others' possessions.

The importance of justice – in relation to fellow-Israelites and resident foreigners – no bribery.

Concern for the vulnerable – e.g. the return of a pawned cloak at nightfall, a ban on usury, the treatment of slaves.

Animals to be shown consideration – the Sabbath rest includes them, rescuing a fallen donkey, providing food for wild animals by leaving land fallow.

The attempt to secure justice and to encourage consideration for others reflected in laws relating to compensation for injuries caused by men embroiled in a fight, by dangerous animals, negligence etc.

Concern for personal morality seen in laws relating to natural and unnatural sexual desires and practices.

Regular observance of the Sabbath, pilgrim festivals and performance of other ritual requirements.

Better answers might cover a wide range of ideas and exemplification together with some discussion of significance of dating and context.

Credit may be given for appropriate use of texts other than those set for study.

[30 marks]**AO1**

0

6

'The Law was a good basis for Israelite society.' Evaluate this claim.

In support

It was clear cut, giving clear guidance that told Jews what was / was not acceptable in society.

It provided protection for vulnerable members of Israelite society from injustice, exploitation etc.

The laws relating to crimes such as theft served as a deterrent.

It encouraged attitudes that would promote a sense of responsibility, compassion, empathy and social cohesion.

Its concern with the best interests of all, regardless of race and status, encouraged stability within which individuals could flourish.

Other views

The Law did not encourage positive attitudes in society as criminal laws were obeyed only through fear of punishment and not out of concern for others.

The Law was a 'blunt tool' and was insufficiently flexible.

The Covenant Code related to a specific lifestyle and was not appropriate for the exilic community or for the more urban society of later times.

Wisdom literature provided a better basis as it arose out of the experience of daily lives and gave people highly practical advice as well as ideals to aim at.

[20 marks]

AO2

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

0

7

Examine ways in which exilic prophecy tried to help those who were experiencing the Exile.

The circumstances of the Exile encouraged doubt, despair and a sense of pessimism about the future – exilic prophecy aimed to deal with this in the following ways:

The assertion of monotheism (e.g. Isaiah 45⁶) and satires on idolatry (e.g. Isaiah 40¹⁹⁻²⁰).

God as the Lord of creation – the whole universe was under his control and he would intervene in the laws of nature to ensure a safe journey back to Judah for his people (e.g. Isaiah 40^{3-4, 28}).

God as the Lord of history – Cyrus was his agent of deliverance (e.g. Isaiah 45¹⁻⁶).

The portrayal of the return to Judah as a new and even more glorious exodus (e.g. Isaiah 43¹⁶⁻²¹).

God's forgiveness of and loving concern for Israel – they were his chosen people, loved by him above all other peoples (e.g. Isaiah 43³⁻⁴).

A glowing future for the Israelites in which justice would prevail and in which they would have a new role as a 'light for the Gentiles' (e.g. Isaiah 42¹⁻⁴; 49⁶).

Credit to be given to appropriate reference to other passages from Isaiah 40-55 or to other exilic prophets.

[30 marks]

AO1

0

8

'Exilic prophecy was too optimistic.' Assess this view.**In support**

There was no good reason for believing in an imminent and glorious return – Babylon was still flourishing and even if Cyrus did overthrow that empire, there was no reason for thinking that he would be any different from other rulers and in any case, Israel would not be independent.

The oracles relating to God's transformation of nature on Israel's behalf and to the response of other nations stretched the imagination (e.g. Isaiah 40⁴; 45¹⁴) and his audience would have found it hard to credit them.

Historical events did not see the realisation of Isaiah's predictions – only a few returned to Judah when given the choice, the journey was doubtless long and hard, they found Jerusalem and the surrounding area in a devastated state and they lived in absolute poverty.

In the long-term, domination by various superpowers and the catastrophe of 70 CE.

Other views

History showed Isaiah's predictions of an imminent return as true – within a few years, Cyrus gave the possibility of return to their homeland to the descendants of all those who had been deported to Babylon.

The predictions of a glorious return may have been exaggerated but were perhaps intentionally so to get across the fact that God loved the exiles and they were still his chosen people – this is still central to Jewish belief and has sustained Jews throughout many terrible experiences.

Isaiah's teaching on the nature of God was essential if the exiles were to break free from the cycle of despair and religious believers would see his assertions of monotheism, the omnipotence of God etc. as an essential part of belief.

[20 marks]**AO2**