
AS

Religious Studies

RSS08 Religion and Contemporary Society
Mark scheme

2060
June 2016

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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 Subsidiary) AS Level Descriptors

<i>Level</i>	AS Descriptor AO1	Marks	AS Descriptor AO2	Marks	AS Descriptors for Quality of Written Communication in AO1 and AO2
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

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 Changing patterns of religious practice in the UK during the 20th century

0 1 Explain what is meant by:

- **changing membership patterns in Christianity**
- **changing denominational structures within Christianity.**

Changing membership patterns

- People used to grow up, be confirmed (or its equivalent) and become full members of the Church, and then stay within that Church. Membership no longer seen as automatic part of growing up.
- People now may be very active within a Church without having taken the step of membership.
- Membership no longer seen as a condition for receiving the Eucharist in some Churches.
- Equally, many who are members may be 'lapsed'.
- Membership of a particular Church is less important, and some may have a shared allegiance between Churches of different denominations.
- Some may belong to house groups or 'new forms of Church' which span different denominations.
- Decline in membership generally.
- Effects of immigration.
- Among those who would count themselves as members, attendance is far lower.
- With many Churches closing, some have had to change their allegiance.
- Statistics show the attraction of 'mega churches', some of which are outside traditional denominational structures.

Changing denominational structures

- Decline in many denominations.
- Ecumenical developments, both in terms of churches which are inter-denominational places of worship, and local ecumenical projects.
- Breaking down of traditional denominational barriers; local churches covenanting together, so that, for example, a local Cathedral may include the celebration of the Eucharist by ministers of other traditions.
- Breaking down of barriers through the Charismatic movement, giving people who are attracted to this form of worship common ground across traditional denominations.

- Rise of new forms of church, (eg Fresh Expressions) which do not fall under traditional denominational headings.
- New denominations, especially, for instance various Black-led Churches.

Maximum Level 5 unless both aspects addressed.

For the highest levels, the first topic needs to include more than simply an account of decline.

[30 marks] AO1

0 2 **'Traditional ways of 'belonging' to Churches as members are no longer important for Christians today.'**

Assess this view.

In support

- Many may cite Davie's view of 'believing without belonging'. Significant decline in membership, yet statistics for belief more robust.
- Sense that one does not have to go to Church to be Christian.
- Lifestyles too busy to allow for Church membership, and Sunday no longer a 'day of rest'.
- 'Joining' no longer so much a part of society in many aspects of life.

Other views

- Many of those who call themselves Christians still see belonging as important.
- They would see this form of commitment as essential.
- Rise in membership in some parts of the Church.
- Some denominations lay great stress on formal membership and expressions of commitment.
- Many geographical variations.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 2 Expressions of religion within society

0 3 Explain the role of faith schools within England and Wales and outline reasons for their expansion.

Explain

- Some old foundations preceding the 1870 Act, and set up to provide for the poor.
- Majority part of the state system.
- Traditionally defined by being voluntary aided or voluntary controlled.
- Varying degrees of state funding according to their status.
- Now including academies.
- Also independent faith schools.
- Altogether about 30% schools are faith schools.
- A few ecumenical schools.
- Provide education for children within locality (particularly the case with rural primary schools, where they may be the only schools in immediate vicinity).
- Also, especially for secondary schools, providing education in a context amenable to the faith concerned.
- Facilities for the practice of the faith.
- Admissions policies allowing priority to those of the faith.

Outline

- Policies of Blair Government, allowing for expansion.
- Parental desire for children to be educated in context amenable to their faith in face of what is often perceived as secular educational system.
- Perceived by many to achieve better results and behaviour.
- In some cases providing access to funding.
- Meeting needs of parents and children, especially in the case of non-Christian faith schools.

Maximum Level 4 for outline only.

Maximum Level 5 for explain only.

[30 marks] AO1

0 4 'In the 21st century, the state should not provide support for faith schools.'

How far do you agree?

Agree

- In a largely secular society, it is an anachronism.
- At a time of economic stringency, the state has other priorities in spending.
- It is divisive unless all groups can be provided for equally.
- It does not encourage children to mix across faith groups, so goes against community cohesion.
- It may be seen as state sponsorship of indoctrination.

Other views

- They provide a valuable resource and are partly supported by funding from the religious bodies concerned. They are therefore helping to support the state system.
- They help to meet religious and cultural needs which would be more difficult for others to provide.
- They support the idea of parental choice.
- In a multi-cultural, multi-faith society it is appropriate for the state to support these needs in education, just as they support diversity of provision in other aspects of life.

[15 marks] AO2

Question 3 Issues of identity and belonging

0 5 Outline the ways in which religions have time requirements for the practice of their religion, and examine the facilities which are needed for the practice of religion.

You may answer with reference to one or more religion(s).

Outline

Examples will vary according to the religions chosen, but are likely to include the following:

- **Times for regular prayer**
 - Muslim prayer times.
 - Christians being free to worship on a Sunday, and not expected to work (or at least to have time to attend Church before working).
 - Jewish observation of Shabbat.
 - strict views of some Christians about activities on a Sunday.
- **Times for special days and festivals**
 - **Christians: Easter and Christmas.** Although these are public holidays, they may still conflict with work expectations, especially Good Friday.
 - **Muslims: Ramadan and Eid.** Particular issues of recognising the demands on individuals of observing Ramadan.
 - **Jews:** Range of festivals, but especially the requirements for the High Holy Days.

Examine

A range of aspects may be covered, depending on the religion being referred to, these may include:

- **Places of worship** which are specific to the religion concerned (eg Churches, synagogues, mosques, Mandirs, gurdwaras, etc).
- **Facilities in public places** eg:
 - prayer rooms for Muslims to pray at the set times.
 - the need for these to be clean and without decoration, as well as to have washing facilities.
 - places for quiet prayer, which may be open to all religions, such as multi-faith prayer rooms found in airports and large shopping centres.
- **Facilities within the home** eg the shrine within a Hindu home, a place to house the Guru Granth Sahib in a Sikh home.
- **Facilities within the community** eg:
 - shops selling halal and kosher foods.
 - shops selling items and artefacts used for the practice of religion within the home.
 - shops selling clothing needed for the observation of the religion (eg for Muslims, Jews and Sikhs).
 - shops selling books which aid the study of the faith.

Maximum Level 4 for outline only.

Maximum Level 5 for examine only.

If only answering from one religion, there needs to be some depth of approach.

[30 marks] AO1

0 6 'In today's society, it is impossible for people to keep up the practice of a religion.'

Assess this view.

Agree

- Time pressures – commitments of work and other demands make it difficult to observe Shabbat, Sunday, or regular prayer times.
- Sunday trading means that Sunday is no longer a day of rest.
- Little time for personal devotions such as prayer and scriptural readings within the home.
- Secular nature of society makes any form of religious practice more marginal rather than normative.
- Prejudice and stereotyping can make people fearful of public displays of religion.

Other views

- Clearly not impossible; many people practise their religion regularly and sincerely.
- Life is busy and fast-paced, but religions have in some cases adapted to help people to combine religion with their daily lives.
- In a multi-faith society, committed to equality, the practice of religion is in some cases easier than it was in the past.
- If there are difficulties, these can increase people's commitment to their faith.

[15 marks] A02

Question 4 An introduction to New Religious Movements (NRMs)

0 7 Outline the reasons for the rise of New Religious Movements and examine the key features of such movements.

Outline reasons for their rise

- Range of factors, both theological and sociological.
- Dissatisfaction with mainstream religion.
- Relative deprivation theory.
- Role of charismatic leaders.
- Concern about the state of the world making millenarian view attractive and credible.

Key features:

The sorts of movements they are:

- Mainly arising in past 200 years.
- Often small, sometimes protest against mainstream.
- Usually fundamentalist, usually with strict codes of behaviour.
- Often attracting those from the margins of society.
- Role of charismatic leaders.

Millenarianism

- Belief held by many, but not all such movements.
- Brief reference to scriptural origins of beliefs.
- Idea of 1000 year rule by God.
- Cataclysmic events.
- Salvation for the elect.

Different types of NRMs

- Sect/cult typology.
- Close knit and communal nature of some groups.
- World-rejecting, world-affirming and world-accommodating classifications.
- Cult may be short-lived.

Maximum Level 4 for outline only.

Maximum Level 5 for examine only.

[30 marks] AO1

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‘New Religious Movements must now be seen as belonging to the past.’**Assess this view.**

This may be approached in a variety of ways. Some may interpret this in terms of the decline of NRMs, some as NRMs being no longer “new”.

In support

- Many are particularly associated with the late 20th century.
- To some extent reflect the elements of protest of some decades of that period.
- Much of religion in general is in decline, including NRMs.
- NRMs attract far less media attention than they once did.
- Interest may be seen to have shifted to New Age Movements and new forms of spirituality.

Other views

- Movements may change, but new forms of religion still arise.
- Some groups, eg LDS, have a very significant presence.
- Interest in NRMs through novels (eg Rapture, a Song for Issy Bradley) make NRMs known to a wider audience.
- Current concerns over climate change, war and famine make millenarian teachings more credible and accessible to many people.

[15 marks] AO2