



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Religious Studies (4051/4052)
Full and Short Course
Specification A

Unit 10 *Judaism (405010)*

Report on the Examination
2010 examination - June series

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Unit 10 Judaism

General comments

Candidates with a wide range of abilities and from a variety of backgrounds took this unit of the new specification, and some showed an excellent knowledge and understanding of both the beliefs and practices of Judaism. Many candidates had been well prepared for the evaluation questions and were able to provide good, clear evidence and argument to support their opinions and other viewpoints. Centres are reminded that candidates should be familiar with the Hebrew terms used in the specification; they may choose to use other Hebrew words in their answers, but this is not a requirement. There were a number of exceptionally good papers which were a pleasure to read; there were also papers from less able and knowledgeable candidates who struggled with some of the topics examined.

A1 *Worship*

Most candidates had no problem with part (a)(i), but weaker answers were simply a general description of the garment based on the stimulus photograph and did not gain any credit.

In part (a)(ii) less able candidates misread the word 'why' for 'what' and simply described the tallit and did not gain any marks. Some candidates stated that it was a symbol of being married but many were able to gain the two marks available.

Part (b)(i) was generally accurately answered.

Once again less able candidates read 'when' as 'why' in (b)(ii) and explained the significance of tefillin. Some also described what the tefillin were in this part of the question but could not gain extra marks for doing so. However, others were able to provide occasions when tefillin are used.

Part (c) was generally answered well, with candidates providing good explanation for Jews being expected to pray as a group. Less able candidates simply described the minyan. This was not what the question asked for and no marks were awarded for mere description.

In part (d) and in other three mark evaluative answers, examiners found that candidates were still answering as though it were a five mark question in the old specification. This did not disadvantage them. Indeed, there were some extremely full answers which received full marks. However, the question asks for one opinion and explanation, and there is no need to give reasons for more than one viewpoint in answer to these questions.

A2 *Festivals and Pilgrimage*

Candidates showed a good understanding of pilgrimage in part (a).

Able candidates demonstrated an excellent overview of Pesach in part (b) and wrote impressive answers. Less able candidates went into detail about the seder plate. Some answers given were very different from those anticipated by examiners but were credited appropriately.

Part (c) produced some good answers with candidates including information about Yad Vashem as well as the Western Wall. Some candidates confused the idea of pilgrimage with returning to Israel to settle.

A3 Personal Lifestyle

Questions on dietary laws are usually done well and part (a) was no exception. Candidates had a good general understanding of the separate areas for meat and milk. More detailed answers also gave information about colour coding and Pesach preparations.

Again, many candidates gave reasons for and against the quotation in their answers to part (b). Most candidates wrote about the laws being laid down in the Torah and thus for all times; fewer considered that there were any problems with keeping the dietary laws in today's society.

There were some well-argued responses to part (c). Good answers showed an understanding of the religious obligations at Shabbat; weaker answers generally dwelt on problems of getting to the synagogue and did not address the fact that worship also takes place in the home at Shabbat.

A4 Family Life

Many candidates demonstrated a very good knowledge of the marriage ceremony in part (a), but weaker answers did not include any details of what takes place relating specifically to Judaism.

Part (b) was generally well answered. Many candidates had a good understanding of the significance of the home in Jewish life, and some responses here were outstanding; less able candidates did not appreciate the importance of the home.

B5 Beliefs and Sources of Authority

Part (a) was well answered, and candidates displayed a good knowledge of Talmud in part (b)(i). However, candidates found part (b)(ii) one of the most challenging questions on the paper. Many candidates understood the relevance of the Talmud and could support this view, knowing the Talmud was closely linked to the Torah and so was God-given. Some found it hard to appreciate another point of view, perhaps relating to pressures of a changing society or the difficulties of finding time to study the Talmud in detail. It is important that candidates are able to understand a view which they themselves may not hold as, for Level 6, reasoned consideration of two different points of view is required. Phrases such as 'However, some people think that...' may be helpful. However, the two viewpoints do not have to be equally supported, and candidates who feel strongly that one view is correct are entitled to make that clear.

Candidates knew about God as creator in part (c) and produced good answers, but some found it difficult to discuss what was meant by sustainer.

Once again, some candidates did not find it easy to give an alternative point of view in part (d). Most, however, made a good case for the Covenant with Abraham being important, arguing that the Jewish faith was based on the Covenant and making references to Brit Milah and its practice today. Some very knowledgeable candidates discussed whether the Noahide or the Mosaic covenant was more important to Jews than Abraham's. These were all creditable ways of answering the question.

B6 Justice and Equality

Most candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of Jewish teaching for four marks in part (a). Less able candidates simply stated that Jews are against prejudice and discrimination. Some candidates got side-tracked with the Holocaust and failed to mention Jewish teaching or the belief that God made people equal.

Part (b) produced some interesting answers. The high regard women are held in within Orthodox Judaism was very well explained and illustrated by many candidates. There were also some different responses which questioned the equality of women and their rights within Orthodox Judaism. Less able candidates frequently restricted their answers to the home, omitting women's role in the synagogue, and made more generalised, sometimes unsupported statements

There were fairly good answers on discrimination against women in part (c), with many candidates understanding this from a Jewish perspective.

Candidates knew the Holocaust well for four marks in part (d)(i). Less able candidates got sidetracked into describing the indignity of the clothing worn and failed to mention the large numbers of Jews who were killed and the suffering of families. In (d)(ii) many candidates put forward a very good case for continuing to remember the Holocaust. Some candidates experienced more difficulty with an alternative view, but others argued thoughtfully and sensitively about the need to look to the future, to live for those who had died and to ensure that bitterness and prejudice do not prevent progress.