



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2012**

**Religious Studies 4050**

**Unit 10: Judaism**

**405010**

***Report on the Examination***

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## Unit 10: Judaism

### General Comments

On the whole the question paper was well answered. It was accessible to all students and there was a variety of responses, ranging from excellent to satisfactory. All areas of the specification were questioned and the paper gave students a chance to excel in areas in which they had sound knowledge. The extra space enabled many students to develop their answers, but in some cases students still required extra paper.

A majority of the students preferred to answer B6 (personal lifestyles) instead of B5 (family life). Both questions on the whole were answered well.

The aim of the examination was to test the student's knowledge and understanding of Judaism and to assess how Jews put their beliefs into practice etc.

The quality of the student responses was very high and their answers were at times superb. It is clear that they are being well prepared for this examination.

### Part A

#### Question A1: The Synagogue and Worship

(a) This was generally well answered and was a good start for the examination. Those students who did not do well in this question failed to show the importance of wearing the tefillin near the mind and heart.

(b) was well answered, with students evaluating the importance of set times of prayer compared to praying at any time.

It is important to point out here that, on the 6 mark evaluative questions, students **must** put two points of view to gain the higher levels. They must also include some religious input (in this case Jewish beliefs, teaching or practice) so they can access the higher levels. A generic response will only achieve 3 marks maximum.

(c) Some students did not achieve full marks as they mentioned only the separation of men and women as a difference in the synagogue. Some mentioned that reformed synagogues may have women rabbis or not speak the whole service in Hebrew. These were not correct answers as the question clearly asks how the inside of a synagogue may be different. The other areas where students could have gained marks were where the Bimah is placed, and that the reformed synagogues having an organ, microphones etc.

#### Question A2: Beliefs and Sources of Authority

Those students who had sound knowledge of the beliefs and sources of authority achieved excellent marks in this section.

The evaluative question was, on the whole, well answered with students mentioning (as a second point of view) that not only the Responsa, Nevi'im and Ketuvim were good sources of authority, but also the Rabbi.

### **Question A3: Justice and Equality**

This section was testing students' knowledge on justice and equality and the first question (a) was examining their knowledge and understanding on the roles and status of both men and women and their ability to evaluate the roles. It was well answered with some very good points made.

(b) was very well answered. Students knew exactly what was required here, i.e. the causes of prejudice. Relevant answers included fear of the unknown, jealousy, scapegoating, ignorance, economic situations or past experiences.

(c) Surprisingly, this was not as well answered. Many students focused mainly on death in the concentration camps and did not include the systematic attack on the Jewish people leading up to the final solution. Therefore they often did not achieve full marks as they made brief reference to only one area of persecution.

The last question in this section (d) was well answered and really stimulated some good points, with students showing an ability to evaluate thoughtfully.

### **Question A4: Festivals and Pilgrimage**

If students had studied the Jewish Festivals, they found this section quite easy, although some students got mixed up between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It is important that students read the questions correctly, and failure to do so in some cases was evident in A4(b).

(a) On the whole this was well answered, but students needed to explain how each object was used, not what they were. For example, the spice box is passed around and smelt to symbolise the hope that the coming week will be fragrant.

(b) This question asked students to outline how Jews observe Yom Kippur. Again students need to read the question, as it did not ask what Yom Kippur is. Those students who gained full marks clearly knew how Jews observe Yom Kippur, e.g. fasting for 25 hours, not wearing luxuries, wearing white, attending the synagogue etc.

(c) This was a simple evaluation question to test the students on their knowledge of the importance of Yom Kippur and possibly to compare it to other festivals. It was students' choice as to how they answered it as it was a 3 mark question so it was not necessary to give a second point of view.

## **Part B**

The most popular choice for this section was B6, answers to which were, on the whole, of a higher standard than those to B5. Nevertheless, both questions were well answered, with most students being very well prepared for this section.

### **Question B5: Family Life**

(a) Again, students disadvantage themselves when they do not read the question carefully. In this case some simply described the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. The question clearly asks how a Jewish boy is prepared for his Bar Mitzvah, not what the ceremony is. Some answers lacked detail on the Jewish boy's preparation and failed to include how the father helps and detail on the Rabbi's role.

(b) This evaluation question was well answered with some good points on both sides.

(c) This was poorly answered as students failed to show the importance of the marriage ceremony in Judaism. Some wrote about the ceremony itself which was not what the question asked. Those who did well clearly showed how important the ceremony is in the Jewish faith, for example, referring to the importance of the ketubah, chuppah etc.

(d)(i) Again students need to read the question. This question asked students to describe the ceremony when Jews are buried, not the preparation or the mourning period. Those who achieved full marks wrote about the ceremony itself, that is that it takes place in a cemetery, it is a simple service, psalms are read, prayers are said etc.

(d)(ii) This question was well answered. Students are clearly being taught well on how to write an evaluation answer, giving a well argued response with evidence of reasoned consideration from two points of view, using their religious knowledge and understanding effectively.

### **Question B6: Personal Lifestyle**

(a)(i) This question was well answered with clear understanding of the features of a kosher kitchen.

(a)(ii) This was an interesting question comparing kosher laws with keeping Shabbat. Students did well on this, using their knowledge of the importance of kosher laws but also of how important it is to keep the commandment of Shabbat.

(b) Those students who wrote about orthodox dress for women as well as men generally performed better than those who just wrote about one gender. Good knowledge was shown.

(c) This question was well answered with students clearly knowing what a mezuzah is and how it is used.

(d) This question gave students an opportunity to show their knowledge of Jewish lifestyle choices and it was well answered.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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