

Examiners' Report
June 2018

GCSE Religious Studies A 1RA0 2F

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies

Religious Studies A : Area of Study 2, Study of Religion Option 2F – Judaism

This paper consists of two questions: students must answer both questions. The detail of the assessment content is provided in the specification. Centres are to use this, rather than other published resources when planning the course content.

This paper was the first paper sat in this specification. The mean score of the paper was lower than predicted. This was partly due to a lack of appraisal on the (d) questions. However, it was also partly due to a Christianisation of Judasim, which was more noticeable on this paper than on the Judaism papers on Specification B.

Judaism needs to be taught as a world religion that has its own place, and not as the precursor to Christianity and then re-translated from a Christian perspective. This was particularly noticeable on the life-after-death question and the question on types of prayer. It could be seen throughout, where students wrote on almost every question that Jews would behave in a certain way to get to Gan Eden, for example.

In some questions, marks are given for correct spelling and grammar, indicated by SPaG

Question 1 (a)

Candidates were asked to give three beliefs about the Covenant with Abraham.

Many candidates wrote three beliefs and gained all the marks.

Some candidates were confused between Abraham and Moses and wrote a mix of the two Covenants.

Some candidates wrote about the binding of Isaac as part of the Covenant and this was not accepted.

This is an example of the candidate's writing about several different things.

Abraham was not promised children: one child, or descendants, would be acceptable.

The testing of Abraham is not part of the Covenant.

1 (a) Outline **three** beliefs about the Covenant with Abraham.

(3)

Abraham was given multiple tasks by God, in order for him to have multiple children. God kept his promise and gave Abraham, Israel ~~which~~ ^{which} he had circumcised. God tested his faith by stopping him when he was about to kill his son. Abraham was the founder of Judaism.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has written that Abraham would be given Israel.

God gave Abraham circumcision.

2 marks



Separate sentences make the answers easier to mark

Question 1 (b)

This question asked candidates to give two reasons why the Messiah is important for Orthodox Jews. Most candidates answered this well, discussing the end of the world, bringing peace, being a leader, being human, judging and so on.

A few candidates confused the Messiah with the Messiah in Christianity. Some candidates talked about the Messiah being divine, or omnipotent, and others that he will return. These responses were not credited.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the Messiah is important for Orthodox Jews.

(4)

The Messiah is important to Orthodox Jews because they believe that he will bring about the messianic age and therefore all Jews will return to Israel. This is important because it is the promised land.

The Messiah is also important because he will restore peace. This means there will be no more conflict regarding Israel.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate gives two developed reasons why the Messiah is important for Orthodox Jews.

He will bring about the messianic age (1) and all the Jews will return to Israel (1)
He will restore peace (1) so there will be no more conflict in Israel (1)

4 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Leave a blank line between points

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the Messiah is important for Orthodox Jews.

(4)

Orthodox Jews believe the Messiah will bring around the messianic age, where Judaism will be the main religion and the world will be at peace, which is important because it is 'God's' plan.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This candidate gives one developed reason and one reason:

- will bring around the messianic age (1), where Judaism will be the main religion (1)
- the world will be at peace (1)

3 marks

Question 1 (c)

This question asked about Jewish beliefs about life after death.

Most candidates received 3 marks for Gan Eden and Gehenna, with a development. Few candidates mentioned a source of wisdom and authority for this question, although many did try, eg: 'and if you are good you go to Gan Eden, by being good you could follow the Ten Commandments not to kill'. This was not credited - the source of wisdom must link to the question.

The most-able candidates wrote about Gan Eden and Gehenna, and then the Messianic Age, and used Maimonides 13 Principles as the source of wisdom.

There was an excellent use of religious terms, such as Sheol, Olam Ha Ba, Gehinnom, almost always used correctly.

There was a Christianisation of this, however, with much talk of purgatory, and of eternal punishment. Candidates should be able to distinguish between the different beliefs.

(c) Explain **two** Jewish teachings about life after death.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

Jewish teachings refer life after death for
example one teaching of Jewish liturgy is that
when you die, this is not the end.

Jewish teachings teach us that life after
death will bring Jews closer to God.

Jewish teaching also teach us that after death God
shall judge us by our sins and actions, this
then in the Torah tells us that it will lead
us closer to 'Gan Eden'



This candidate gives one reason and one developed reason:

- it will bring Jews closer to God (1)
- God will judge us (1) and get us to Gan Eden (1)

3 marks



Use quotes that are linked to the question asked

(c) Explain **two** Jewish teachings about life after death.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

One Jewish teaching is that good Jews will go to Gan Eden. This is ~~import~~ a place where Jews are with God in peace and harmony. A reason they believe this is because it says in the Tenakh Jews will be rewarded for following Mitz^{vot}~~ot~~. Another Jewish teaching is that those who don't go to Gan Eden will go to ~~G~~ Gahinnom. This is a place of judgement and a place where Jews have the chance to cleanse their souls.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate gives two developed reasons, with reference to a source of wisdom

- good Jews will go to Gan Eden (1) where Jews are with God (1) as it says in the Tenakh that Jews will be rewarded for following the mitzvot (1)
- Those who don't, go to Gahinnom (1) this is the place of judgement (1)

5 marks

Question 1 (d)

The vast majority of candidates understood the question and recognised the word 'mitzvot'.

The vast majority understood that the question was asking them to decide whether the mitzvot is more or less important than something else.

The best answers gave the arguments and then appraised them, saying why they were good or bad arguments. The best answers evaluated fully and wrote coherently.

Most candidates gave a 'for and against' style argument, often with much knowledge, but without really answering the question.

*d) "Keeping the Mitzvot is the most important part of being a Jew."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

I agree with this statement, many Orthodox Jews believe that the Mitzvot is very important. This is because ~~there~~^{they} are the many laws that God gave Jews to live by. Not following these laws might result in not going to Gan Eden.

I disagree with this statement as many liberal or reform Jews are not that strict in their daily lives. It would be extremely hard to follow all 613 laws exactly, and some Jews might believe the Mitzvah is much more important, for example, feeding the poor and hungry. Also God gave Jews free will to follow it.

I agree with this statement as Orthodox Jews take the Mitzvot as the literal word and commandments. So to not follow them is wrong as God is the creator and judge. Jews might believe they are doing wrong in

not following the laws.

In conclusion I agree with this statement as the Mitzvot is the foundation of Judaism, and is what Jews live their life by. Without the Mitzvot, Jews wouldn't know wrong from ~~is~~ right.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate reaches Level 2 because:

- the response is a basic for and against' argument – some Jews believe following the mitzvot is important, some think they are less important
- there is very little religious teaching or belief and the conclusion makes an attempt at a reason
- there is no appraisal

5 marks

SPaG: 3 marks

Total: 8 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Appraisal is needed if you are to evaluate effectively

If you are not evaluating, you are not answering the question

*d) "Keeping the Mitzvot is the most important part of being a Jew."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

I strongly agree with this statement because following the mitzvot laws are the basis of being a Jew. For starters, the Mitzvot laws, were given by God to Moses, at the covenant at Sinai, to follow all these laws were a representation of your loyalty to God. This is why Jews try their best to follow all of the laws, as they want to show their love to God.

In addition to this, Jews believe that when the Messianic Age has come to be, then those who ~~that~~ had lived a faithful life, will be sent to heaven and acknowledged by God. Moreover, the 613 Mitzvot show Jews that God is a law-giver (he

gave the laws to Moses at Mount Sinai), and when the Messianic Age comes or when someone dies, he will be seen as a judge (only God can judge one another as he was the one that gave us laws).

Some people may disagree with me because in an everyday life, it makes it difficult to follow all laws.

For example,

someone may have to work on the Sabbath day to save someone's life.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate reaches Level 2 because:

- the response starts well, and the religious reasoning is good
- they do not evaluate the argument, rather they only show arguments agreeing
- there is no conclusion

5 marks

SPaG: 3 marks

Total: 8 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

There are only 3 marks available for knowledge on (d) questions: the rest of the marks are AO2

Question 2 (a)

The question asked how Sukkot is celebrated. It is worth reminding candidates how to answer the different types of questions, because a number of them answered **why** it is important, rather than **how** it is celebrated.

The best answers talked about living in a tabernacle or sukkot, of welcoming visitors and guests, of the lulav and etrog.

2 (a) Outline **three** ways Sukkot is celebrated.

(3)

Sukkot is celebrated by going to a Synagogue service, eating a special meal and constructing a tent to remind Jews of what their freed ancestors had to live in during the desert.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate gives three ways Sukkot is celebrated:

- they go to the synagogue (1)
- they eat a special meal (1)
- they construct a tent (1)

3 marks

2 (a) Outline **three** ways Sukkot is celebrated.

edgan Sukkah
Levie

(3)

one way sukkot is celebrated is by staying in sukkah's/huts.

Another way is harvesting edgan a citrus fruit.

A third way is by using palm leaves.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate writes three sentences outlining three ways:

- they stay in a hut (1)
- they harvest edgan (the word 'harvest' is not quite correct, but the knowledge is there) (1)
- they use palm leaves (1)

3 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Be specific – answers should be specific to the festival, not generalised

Question 2 (b)

This was about Bar Mitzvah. Again, the majority of candidates knew what this is, and were able to obtain marks for observing eg that it:

- is a coming of age for Jewish boys
- allows them to read the Torah in the synagogue
- allows them to be part of a minyan
- allows them to be responsible for their own prayers

A few candidates wrote that a Bar Mitzvah makes a boy a man, and this was only accepted if they then wrote about how this is within the religion, or the synagogue.

A few candidates confused this with Bat Mitzvah, or with Brit Milah.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Bar Mitzvah ceremonies are important for many Jews.

(4)

These ceremonies are important because it represents when a young Jew is now turning into a man. They are now able to start reading the Torah and following the mitzvot.

In addition to this, they believe that it strengthens the faith with the Lord.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate gives one developed reason and one simple reason:

- It is a Jew turning into a man (1) and they can read the Torah (1)
- It strengthens their faith with God (1)

3 marks

Question 2 (c)

This question asked why Shabbat is important. It was well-answered generally and most candidates gave a source of wisdom (either from creation, or from the Decalogue).

Where candidates did not receive the five marks, it was often because their answer was confused. For example, they discussed needing to rest, but linked that to the commandment, rather than creation. Overall, a response such as this could not be separated into two developed reasons, with a source of wisdom.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why celebration of Shabbat is important.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

The celebration of Shabbat is important because the Shabbat is the day G-d rested and by us resting we are following G-d Mitzvot. This suggests we are leading the life G-d wanted us to.

The celebration of Shabbat is also important because it is part of 613 laws made by God known as the Mitzvot and 10 of the Mitzvot were given to Moses on Mount Sinai so it reminds Jews of the covenant with Moses.



The candidate gives two developed reasons and refers to a source of wisdom.

Reason 1:

- it is the day God rested (this is the reference to the source of wisdom) (1)
- we are following the mitzvot (1) living the life God wants us to (1)

Reason 2:

- it is in the laws given to Moses (1) and so remembers the covenant (1)

5 marks



You do not have to quote word-perfectly to be given the 5th mark. It is enough to reference the story in the Torah, for example

However, only saying 'because it is in the Torah' will not receive credit

(c) Explain **two** reasons why celebration of Shabbat is important.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

✦ In the Torah in Genesis 1, God rested on the seventh day when he created the ~~world~~ world. Also, the decalogue mentions that Jews ~~have~~ should keep the Sabbath day (Friday night to Saturday evening) holy. Jews follow the example of God and follow the rules of the mitzvot.

Also, Isaiah wrote 'Hashem is our lawgiver' which means that God created law that the Jews must follow, and one of them is to rest ~~at~~ on the Sabbath day. They spend this time reflecting on God and praying.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The candidate has given three basic reasons in paragraph one and any of these can be developed with 'Jews follow the example of God'

The candidate gives one developed reason with a source of wisdom in the second paragraph.

- The decalogue mentions that... (1) Jews follow the example of God (1)
- Isaiah wrote Hashem is our lawgiver (1), God gave laws that Jews must follow (1) such as resting on the Sabbath Day (1)

There are several reasons in paragraph one, but none of them is developed. One mark - but only one - could be given for any of these reasons.

5 marks

Question 2 (d)

This question asked whether public prayer or private prayer was better. The best answers talked of the difference in requirement to pray the Shema and the Amidah, the need for a minyan, the Shekhinah's presence and so on.

As in the other (d) question, there was very little appraisal or evaluation and most candidates gave two sides of the argument and a conclusion.

(d) "Private prayer is more important than public worship."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

'God on the bank of your bed
and .

(12)

Some Jews would agree that private prayer is more important than public ^{or worship} prayer because it is a more personal form of worship that is done 'on the edge of the bed'. Private prayer can be done anytime and as a result of this, some Jews may believe that the more accessible method is more important. Also private prayer focuses on personal reflection which gives those praying a sense of focus and a strengthened conscience and inner spirit by doing this.

Other Jews would disagree and believe that ~~public~~ public worship like public prayer is more important, as the community is united 'as one'. Jews are taught ~~that~~ in the Scriptures to pray in groups or minyan as by being in a group of '10 or more people' saying the shema, the divine presence is there.

To conclude, I believe that most Jews would believe that ~~the~~ private prayer is more important than public worship because it strengthens one's inner spirit and also ^{makes} gives prayer more personal.



The candidate reaches Level 2 because:

- This is a basic 'for and against' argument
- The conclusion offers an attempt at making a judgment – this is partially justified

6 marks

(d) "Private prayer is more important than public worship."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Jewish teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

One reason some may agree with the statement is because prayer is a way to communicate ~~to~~ with God, which is personal since it is an attempt to build your relationship with 'God' individually.

However someone could disagree because in Jewish teachings it is said that if "10 or more are gathered and their words are of the Torah the Shekinah is within their midst". Again it is taught that if two or more gather to study the Tenach then the Shekinah is present. Since there are no teachings highlighting the presence of the Shekinah, the Divine presence, during private prayer it can be argued private prayer is less important.

Another reason some could agree with the statement is because in repentance

prayer, you rebuild the relationship with 'God', and asking for forgiveness and confessing is a private practice but extremely important to continue your relationship with 'God'.

In conclusion some may agree "private prayer is more important than public worship" because

(Total for Question 2 = 24 marks)

It builds an individual's connection with God, as well as the ability to ask for forgiveness or thanksgiving. However others would disagree because in Jewish teaching it is taught that if ten or more people gather to discuss the Torah then ~~the~~ the Shekinah is present.

TOTAL FOR PAPER = 51 MARKS

FOR

- Personal relationship
- discuss own issues / thanksgiving. Ⓞ
- repentance = private + personal. speaking directly to their God. Ⓞ

AGAINST

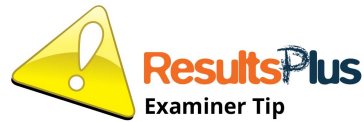
- 10+ discuss Shekinah = present. Ⓞ
- 21 words = of Torah Shekinah: Present. Ⓞ



The student reaches Level 3 because:

- There is an accurate understanding of religion and belief with evidence of appraisal - 'Since there are no teachings highlighting the presence of the Shekhinah during private prayer, it can be argued that private prayer is less important.'

7 marks



Use your knowledge to **support** the answer, rather than **as** the answer

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Do not attach extra sheets to your examination paper: write within the scannable pages using the blank spaces
- When answering the (a) items use three separate, full sentences
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in (c) items must be relevant to the question and support the reason given
- The (d) items asks for evaluation, after considering the evidence. Higher marks are achieved if the evidence/reasons given, is/are 'considered' or appraised for their value as an argument as part of deciding the evaluation
- On (d) items the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that will be credited in the answer
- Students should read the questions carefully, and answer the question asked fully

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